The Long Island FISHERMAN

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March 1st, 1979 ★ Volume 14, Number 9 ★ *14th Year of Publishing* ★ FIFTY-CENTS

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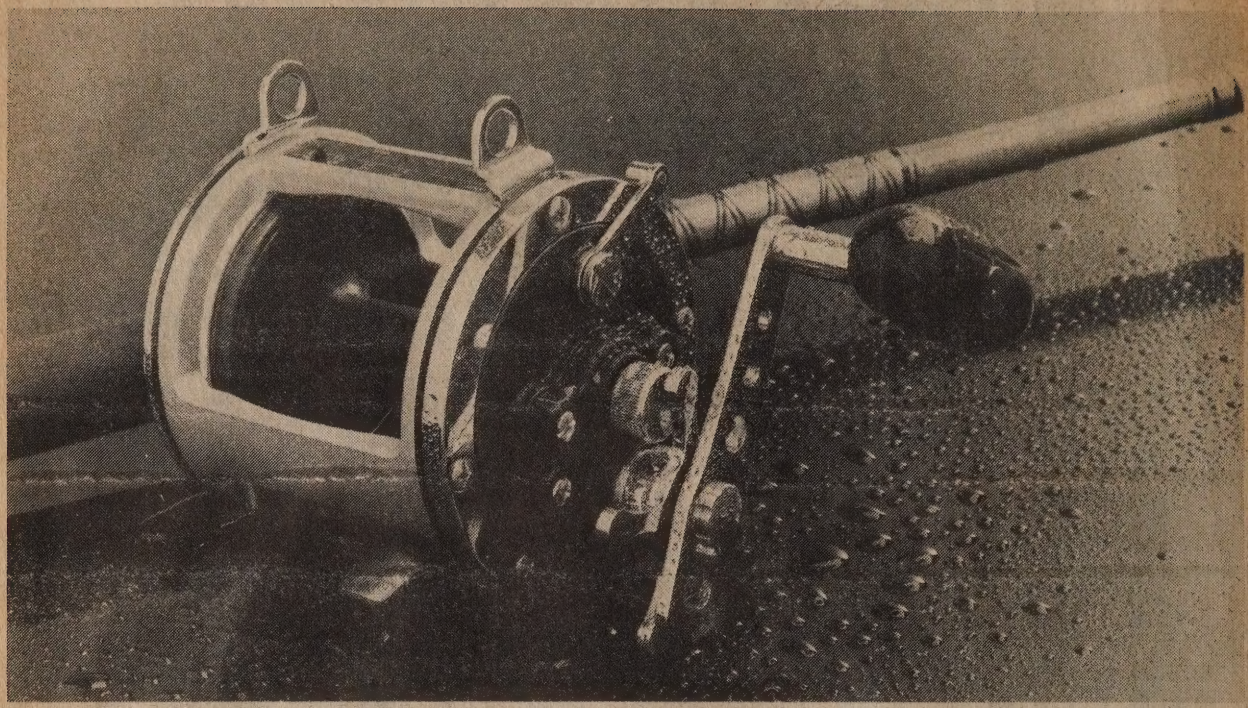

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Bluefish may be on the verge of extinction as the most popular saltwater gamefish if purse seiners are allowed to establish an export fishery for them. To find out how YOU can put a stop to this, read the Editorial on page 4 of this issue.

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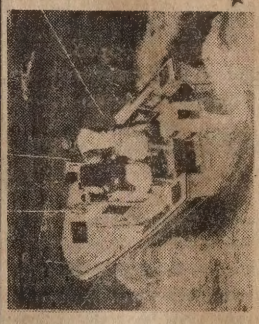

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The Fighting Chair

Are Bluefish Facing Virtual Extinction as a Gamefish?

You are probably about to read the most important editorial ever printed in The Long Island Fisherman's fourteen years of publishing. In all likelihood, its impact (or lack of it) will determine whether or not there are any bluefish remaining in our waters to be caught by recreational sportfishermen in the very near future. We are telling every sportfisherman that you have a choice to make: accept the virtual extinction of the bluefish as a game fish, or ensure yourself of continued good fishing for generations to come. Read what we have to say, then decide—the choice is yours.

The problem centers around purse seining for bluefish, and whether or not American commercial fishermen should be permitted to develop a frozen fish export market for bluefish. The controversy first came up last year when rumors started going around that the purse seiners were experimenting, with Japanese support, with the feasibility of using the nets of the huge tuna fleets to catch bluefish for export. Al Ristori asked that based on these rumors (whether true or not), the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fisheries Council take action to prevent this new rape of our fisheries before it actually developed. At first the Council balked at this proposal, preferring to wait for an actual problem to develop before starting work on its bluefish management plan because of the workload the Council was under. But it seems they have changed their minds, no doubt in large part from the many sportfishermen who wrote letters protesting this "closing-the-barn-door" mentality, and have decided to start work on the Council's management plan for bluefish years sooner than planned.

The first step they have taken is to schedule two fact finding hearings in our area to gather data from both the sportfishing and commercial segments of the fishery. The first hearing will be held at the Holiday Inn, Route 25, Riverhead, on Tuesday, March 6, from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. A second meeting for fishermen living on the West End of Long Island has been scheduled to be held at the Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Highway, Rockville Centre on Monday, March 12 from 7PM to 10PM. We cannot overstress the importance of your attendance at one of these meetings.

You may be wondering why there is all the sudden interest by the commercial fishermen in purse seining bluefish when up to this point they have considered the blue to be more of a nuisance fish than anything else. Before we discuss why, however, it is important to make a distinction at this point. We are not talking about our local commercial fishermen who catch most of their bluefish with gill nets and haul seines creating a problem. Traditionally, the bluefish has not been one of their prime target species because of their low market value. The present commercial fishery for bluefish is strictly a fresh fish market, and that market can only absorb a small poundage of fish. As a result, it doesn't take many bluefish coming into the market to depress the price of the fish to only a few pennies a pound, making it uneconomical to fish for them on any large scale. There is very little conflict between sport and commercial fishermen as a result, and if the commercial fishing for bluefish were to continue in its present form and level, we can't see any reason why we shouldn't live together in relative harmony for the foreseeable future.

The purse seiners may be about to upset this balance by entering the fishery for bluefish, and it's interesting to look at the reason why they are looking to enter it in the first place. Up until this time purse seiners were content to fish for tuna, but in the last few years they have run into a serious problem: there aren't any school tuna left to catch! After overfishing the species for years, they have finally depleted the stocks to the point where drastic conservation measures are about to be implemented. Bruce Freedman, who is the Northeast Regional Director for NMFS, told us recently that public hearings will be held in the near future

on the proposed changes in the tuna regulations for 1979. One of these changes will eliminate entirely the quota for taking school tuna with purse seines so that the few remaining fish can rebuild the fish stocks. (More on the new tuna regulations in a future editorial.) So, having depleted one fish stock by overfishing, the fleets of tuna clippers must find another fish to exploit. Unfortunately for sportfishermen, the only schooling fish around in sufficient numbers to be a viable fishery for the extremely sophisticated purse seine fleets is the bluefish. The only problem they confront is the marketing problem we mentioned. In order to get a sufficient price to justify the investment in new nets with smaller mesh, a new market would have to be established. They didn't have to look far: it appears that they have found an enthusiastic partner in the Japanese, who seem anxious to establish a frozen bluefish export market by guaranteeing a price per pound to our commercial fishermen. With such a guarantee, and having already proven the feasibility of purse seining bluefish, there is nothing stopping the purse seiners from entering the blue fishery en masse. And then it will only be a matter of time before the bluefish goes the way of the bluefin tuna ... something you remember catching on rod and reel.

Naturally the purse seiners are very quiet about their plans, and the big businesses controlling the tuna fleets aren't exactly wearing out printing presses sending out news releases about their intentions. What actions they will take once they have a price guarantee are simple to foresee. First, they will re-equip their vessels with new nets, putting the tuna nets in mothballs until they are permitted to exploit this species again sometime in the future. When the bluefish start their northward migration up the Maryland and Jersey Coast and inshore migration from offshore, the purse seiners will keep a low profile by fishing far offshore out of sight of the boats sportfishing for the blues—perhaps even fishing at night. By the time the tuna clippers are forced to move inshore to follow the fish and start having the inevitable conflicts with sportfishermen, it will be too late to stop them because they will already have established a viable fishery. Their arguments to continue the fishery will be simple: "It isn't against the law and we've spent millions of dollars for gear changes and **NOW** you're going to tell us we can't catch bluefish?" So the only way to stop this potential disaster from occurring is to stop the purse seining of bluefish BEFORE IT STARTS!!

The purse seiners may seek to "compromise" by saying they will accept a quota limiting their catch, but this wouldn't work either because of the very nature of purse seining. Let's suppose for a moment that a quota is placed on purse seiners, and they are only permitted to harvest ten percent of the available bluefish. This plan would be acceptable if their nets only caught every tenth bluefish, but the nature of the fishery doesn't work that way. Purse seiners would take every tenth SCHOOL of bluefish, which means that they would be removing their catch from a confined geographic area. To show how disastrous this practice would be to sportfishermen and the sportfishing industry, let's go back in time to 1977 and the area known as the Triangle off Montauk Point. During that banner year hundreds of private boats, charterboats and open boats fished this area of only a few square miles everyday from July well into October. Who can place a realistic value on the recreational pleasure, not to mention the money spent, of catching these bluefish for an entire season by thousands of sportfishermen? But if purse seining for bluefish had been a viable fishery in 1977, the sportfishing for blues in the Triangle would have been very short lived. A single tuna clipper working a purse seine would have cleaned the school out in only a day or two. And when another school of bluefish filled the void, the spotter planes of the purse seining fleets would quickly see to its removal, also.

So the only solution to the problem is a complete ban on the use of purse seines for catching bluefish. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Fisheries Council has the power and authority to include such a ban in the management plan it is preparing, and can prevent such a directed fishery before it gets off the drawing board. The Council is having these fact finding hearings to gather data on bluefishing, and it is imperative that we impress upon them the importance of the bluefish to the recreational sportfishermen. We have to let them know that if they permit this rape of our fishery to take place, that it is going to create a tremendous social upheaval and they are going to have thousands of angry sportfishermen to contend with. A few years ago, The Long Island Fisherman conducted a readers' survey which showed that sixty-five percent of the sportfishermen in New York State considered the bluefish the number one game fish swimming in our waters. According to the last survey held by the Federal Government, there are 2.3 million saltwater sportfishermen in New York, which means that there are about one-and-a-half million sportfishermen fishing for blues in our state alone. We'd like to see so many of these anglers show up at the scheduled hearings to voice their outrage that the

(Continued on page 37.)

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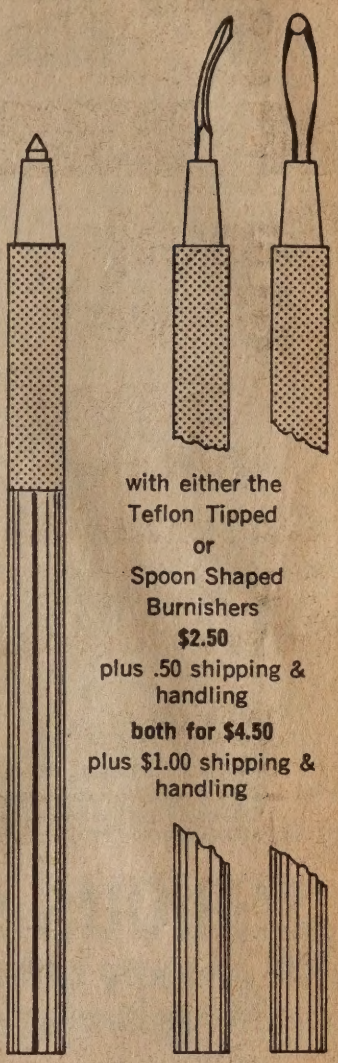

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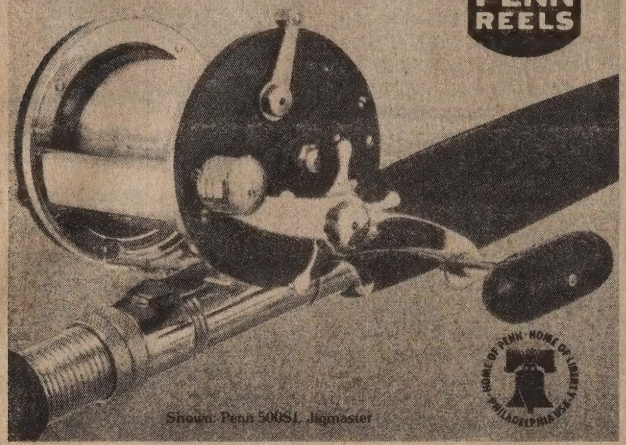

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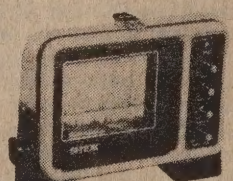

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CHUM LINES

I'LL BET THAT YOU WON'T PRINT THIS ONE!

You answered our letter in Chum Lines during this past summer, but you didn't follow through. You promised to give us an in-depth article on bucktail fishing from the surf. Since you said it would be in the fall, we waited. It is winter now, and still no article. Come on, Doc, get off the pot. Give us some in-depth articles to make us better surf fishermen. We would also be interested to know how you polish up your chrome tin in the spring and how you fish with them. We would like to have an honest answer this time. I don't think you'll print this type of letter, but at least give it some careful thought. We still applaud you and your magazine. *Paul Markham & Friends.*

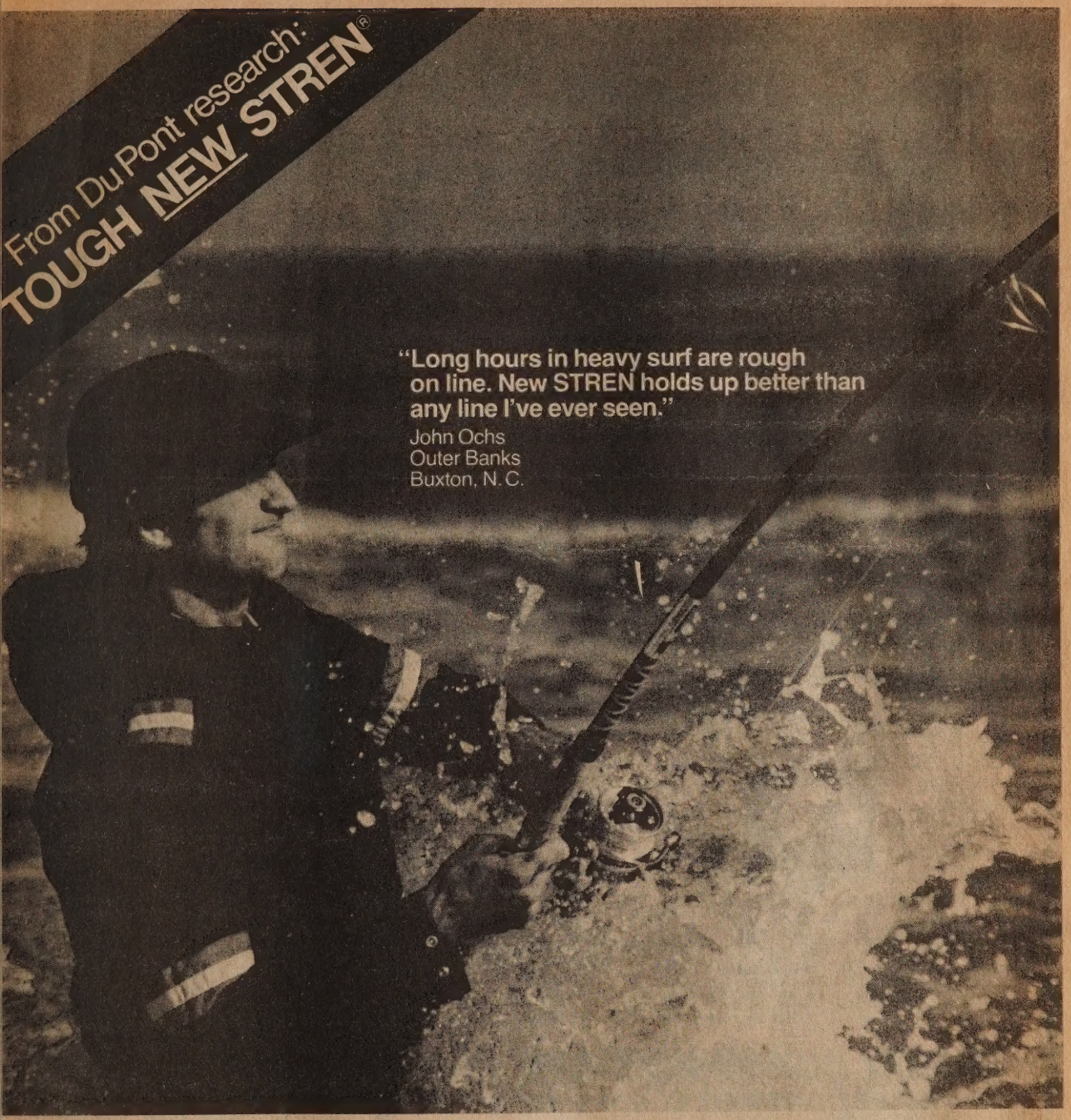
Come on, Paul. Why wouldn't we print your letter? You're right! We did promise you that we would have bucktail fishing articles in one or more of the 1978 SURFSIDES. But as luck would have it, schedules were changed and bucktailing did not appear. However, we will make every effort to have something in SURFSIDE this year. In fact, I was just talking about that subject the other day with John Fritz. We were trying to figure out who will write it. If for some reason it doesn't show up this year, don't bite our heads off—we'll try. You might want to check back issues of LIF for articles by John DeMaio on bucktailing. He's a boat fisherman, but an expert on those bucktails. His articles may hold you until we can get something in SURFSIDE.

How do I polish my chrome tins in the spring? Easy, I use NOXXON. How do I fish with them? Generally, a slow retrieve, but there are times when modifications of technique are needed. Check out "Metal Plugs" in Issue #10 this year by John Fritz for more info on fishing with tins. **W.A.M.**

SURF CAUGHT WHITING AND LING

First off, I would like to congratulate you and the rest of the staff on your fine publication. I have recently renewed my subscription for two more years and I eagerly await each issue. I'm still rather inexperienced, but between the information in your articles and old-timers on partyboats I'm learning.

In your recent article, "King Cod and Other Things," you mentioned surf fishing for whiting and ling. I would really like to give this a try. The reason I am writing is that I thought you might have some specific suggestions on where to go, guided by your own experiences and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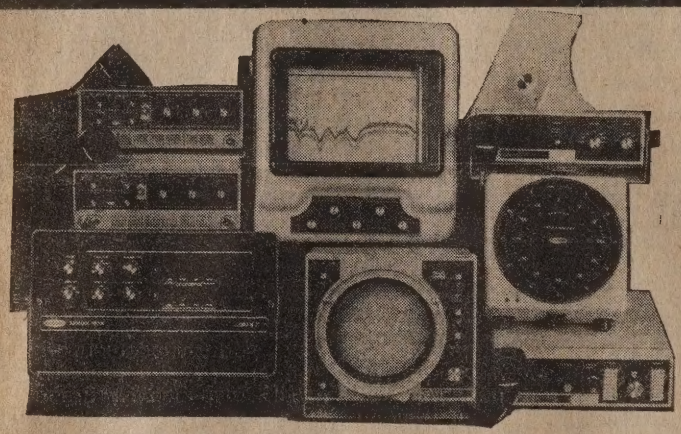

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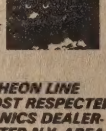

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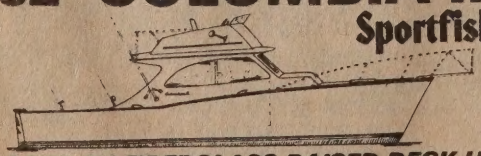

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the current fishing reports.

I live near Breezy Pt. and own a car, so I could fish Rockaway Inlet, E. Rockaway Inlet or take a drive out to Sore Thumb. What I would really like to know is if there are piers that are productive for whiting and ling because fishing alone on a beach at night in January is not such a good idea. Also, is the fishing limited to the night?

If you could send me this info, I would really appreciate it because your article just whetted my appetite and I'm dying to go soon. Perhaps if more people are interested, it could be the subject of an article for the future.

Thank you very much for your consideration. *Vincent F. Stempel, Jr., Ridgewood, N.Y.*

Whiting can show up on the beach at any time during the cold months, but are most common on the South Shore when a northwest wind blows on a clear, cold moonlit night. The whiting will often chase spearing right onto the sand and you need only pick them up. But for more detailed information, I'd suggest that you refer to Issue #16 "Whiting Fishing at Gin Beach" by Carl Fritsche and Issue #18 "Striper Substitute" by John Fritz, which appeared in 1978. Good luck and let us know if you catch any fish. **W.A.M.**

TO SELL OR NOT TO SELL?

A copy of "The Long Island Fisherman," January 11, 1979, #2, was given to me at the current N.Y. Boat Show.

I read the various articles about fishing with great interest, then came to page 51, with the "Montauk Best Bet" column. In it, Captain Paul Forsberg advertises the 67 hours of solid fishing for $250. And he does not fail to mention to his customers that the current dockside price for fish is $1.10 per pound—selling the catch and making a profit!

I know very well, from my own experience, that Captain Paul Forsberg makes a living by selling boat space for "fishermen" who then hawk their catches.

Is this conservation? Sportsmanship? Or sheer greed for the dollar? No wonder that the interests of conservation of the species, e.g., striped bass, are always defeated by the real professionals who catch fish to make a living for themselves and their families.

I love to fish and I catch a lot of fish from my boat or in the surf, but the day will never come when I sell a fish. When I catch more than I can use, my friends gladly accept them as gifts.

Keep on "pulling 'em in." *Lou Hess, New York, N.Y.*

I like to think that I'm a sportsman too, but I don't get upset when a fella shoots a deer or sells his fish necessarily. To each his own. If someone were to shoot down a deer just for the kick of killing it and then

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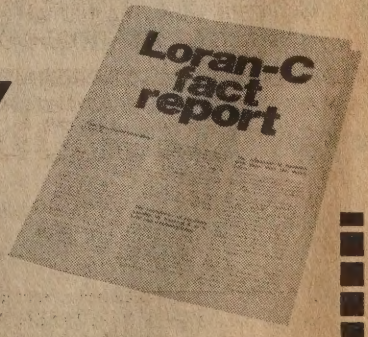

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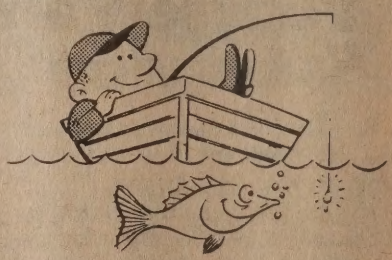
let it rot, I might balk; but to shoot for sport and food is a man's right—although I do not share the philosophy. I'm not crazy about sportsmen selling their fish, but as long as the law allows it, who can blame them. If it costs a guy fifty bucks for the day's fishing and he can get it back, then he sees himself as better off and so do his wife and kids. Captain Forsberg is both a gentleman and a good fisherman. He's also a good businessman, which is why he stays in business while others go by the boards. It is a tricky thing, but we should try not to impose our beliefs on others too quickly. Maybe you are right; I don't know. I do know that as long as fish go for several dollars a pound, and as long as the law allows us to sell them, then folks have a right to do so. Incidentally, the New York DEC will seek the introduction of legislation that would require anyone who wishes to sell fish to obtain a permit for about $50. I think that if passed, that law might cut down on a lot of casual selling, and yet still provide reasonable circumstances for those who make a living from the sale of fish. **Dr. W. A. Muller.**



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NATIONAL SCENE

NEWS & NOTES ON THE WORLD OF FISHING
with Al Ristori

Bluefish Fact-Finding Hearings Coming Up

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council will soon be taking the first steps in the direction of a management plan for bluefish. Fact-finding hearings are scheduled for six sites, ranging from Virginia Beach, Virginia to Riverhead, Long Island. The purpose of these meetings is to elicit information from both sport and commercial segments about the fishery. Despite the great popularity of this species, there is a definite lack of both fishery and scientific data. Before the Council can proceed further, it must have the best available data.

The first hearing within this area will be held at the Holiday Inn, Route 25, Riverhead, Long Island, from 7:30 - 10:30 p.m., on Tuesday, March 6. Western Long Island fishermen won't have to travel that far to have their say. Another meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Highway, Rockville Center, Long Island, from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., on Monday, March 12. New Jersey meetings are set for the Borough of Belmar Municipal Building, 8th Avenue and Highway 35, Belmar on Tuesday, March 13, and at Jimmy's Restaurant, Exit 63 off Garden State Parkway (east 500 feet), Barnegat on Monday, March 19; both New Jersey hearings start at 7:30 p.m.

While these meetings are completely informal, and set-up to receive any comments or information relative to bluefish, there are a series of questions the Council staff would like to have brought up for discussion.

1. How severe is competition for fishing space for bluefish among private, charter, and party boats, and among commercial fishing vessels and gear? Are conflicts likely to occur? Is this problem significant in this area? Are conflicts more likely to occur inshore (within three miles of shore) or offshore?

2. What is the distribution of fishing effort in this area for bluefish, inshore versus offshore, by private boats, charter and head boats, and commercial fishing vessels and gear?

3. What percentage of recreationally-caught (either by private or party or charter boats) bluefish is sold? How and where does this occur? What is the effect of this practice on the sport and commercial fishery for bluefish?

4. How dependent is the sport fishing industry on bluefish? That is, what percentage of the head or charter boat business, in terms of revenue, passengers, and fishing time, comes from bluefish trips?

5. How much money—overall—would you estimate a passenger on either a charter or head boat spends for a day's fishing for bluefish (for such things as fare, equipment rentals, food, bait, etc.)?

6. As a private boatowner/fisherman, how much money would you estimate you spend for a day's fishing for bluefish (fare, equipment rentals, bait, motels, fuel, etc.)? How many days in the last twelve months would you estimate you spent bluefishing, (a) from shore; (b) from a party or charter boat; (c) from a private boat?

7. By port, how many passengers would you estimate were taken by head and charter boats to fish for bluefish last year?

8. What is the importance of bluefish to commercial fishermen? That is, how many weeks per year do commercial fishermen (depending on gear) conduct a directed fishery for bluefish? To what degree is the commercial fishery for bluefish affected by the availability and ex-vessel price of other species?

9. If the commercial fishery were expanded to service an export market, what sectors of the industry would most likely become involved? At what guaranteed price per pound would commercial fishermen switch over to bluefish as their main fishery?

10. How many fishermen and processors in this area would like to enter a bluefish-for-export business? What is the capacity of local fishermen and processors to catch, freeze or process, and ship bluefish? Would the recreational industry want or be able to enter this market also?

11. At present, where and how is most of the bluefish caught commercially in this area sold? If significant quantities of bluefish caught by sport fishermen are sold in this area, to whom and how is this done?

It would be helpful if some thought were given to these questions prior to the hearing, in order that everything may be covered during the time period. Specific figures relative to actual catches would be helpful, and any such information will be held in the strictest confidence. It will be released only in aggregate form and

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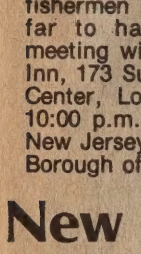

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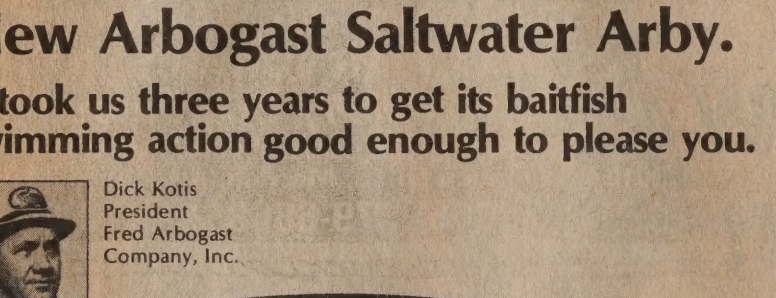

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without individual identification. Anyone unable to make these meetings can provide information or express opinions by writing to: Mr. John C. Bryson, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Federal Building, Room 2115, North & New Streets, Dover, Delaware 19901.

Though no particular management schemes are contemplated at this time, it is important that the Council proceed expeditiously with a plan. Until a management plan is in place, the Council has no authority over the fishery and is not in a position to deal with an emergency situation. No one should have to be reminded about the importance of the bluefish to the fisheries along the mid-Atlantic Coast at the present time. Most party and charter boat fleets are now so dependent on that species for the major portion of their income that it's unlikely they could stay in business if a serious scarcity developed. While the present situation looks very favorable, it would be foolhardy to proceed as if bluefish will be with us in virtually unending quantities forever. A good turnout at these hearings will help speed the Council's work in this area, and pave the way for additional research.

Canadian Agreement May Prove a Problem for Area Fishermen

Apparently in response to orders from above (and I'm not referring to the Almighty), the State Department has rushed through a deal with the Canadians on jointly shared fisheries. The major question—the boundary line between the fisheries jurisdictions of each country—has been left to the World Court for settlement. Though Council members were involved in the discussions all the way, State suddenly decided to go ahead and do what they wanted without regard to Council opinions. Not only did Council members have to read of the tentative agreement in the newspapers, but they were also unable to get an explanation of the situation from State. Despite a specific request from John Bryson, Executive Director of the Mid-Atlantic Council, State refused to send a representative to the February meeting in Ocean City, Maryland. The law provides a non-voting membership on each Council for State, and there is no indication in the Act that Congress intended that State would only fill that seat when they were inclined to.

Mid-Atlantic fishermen can be negatively impacted in several ways by the proposed treaty. Mackerel stocks will be shared (60% U.S. and 40% Canadian) and basically managed by a bilateral commission, rather than the Council. In order to get some New England fishermen redfish quotas in Canadian waters, our neighbors to the north were granted nine percent of the total allowable catch of Loligo squid off our coast. A fifteen percent catch of other species in the course of that fishery will also be permitted. Since the American squid fishery is underdeveloped right now, that allocation will be of no consequence in the near future. However, the agreement runs for ten years, and it's likely that we'll find a few years from now that we've given away a very valuable resource for very little in return.

In view of the lack of information supplied by State a motion, proposed by Nancy Goell and seconded by Yours Truly, informed State that the Council opposes any treaty signed without an adequate explanation. The motion was passed unanimously. Though the Council cannot act directly on this problem, the treaty must go before the Senate for ratification—and every citizen can protest against it. Furthermore, there are serious legal questions involved, as the treaty would take away much of the authority over fishery management granted to the Councils by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976.

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FISH TALK

with Dr. William A. Muller

MARICULTURE

Part V—CRUSTACEAN CULTURE

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU BOUGHT LOBSTER? I'll bet that the price nearly made you faint! But they are delectable little devils and we all break down once in awhile and buy some. It hurts the budget, but soothes the tummy. And to think that less than a century ago lobsters were so plentiful and inexpensive that striped bass fishermen chummed with this most prized of crustaceans. Lobsters, crabs, and shrimp belong to a large group of animals called the Arthropoda. This group includes sub-groups such as the insects and crustaceans. The Arthropods are a very successful group. In fact, there are more individual animals and more species of Arthropod animals than all other types and groups combined. There are over a million species of insects, for example, and some scientists have argued that insects by sheer force of numbers, are the most successful group of animals on earth. Some may take issue with that point of view, but we do have to give the insect his due! Each year, the insects take about one-third of **everything** that man produces! That's a staggering statistic. In some cultures, insects are relished as food the way we love lobsters, crabs, and shrimp. Incidentally, shrimp are very expensive, too. During the holidays, I went into a fish store to buy some shrimp for a Chinese dish we were going to make. The store had some true jumbo shrimp—all yours for $7 plus a pound! Crabs, which used to be the poor man's lobster have also risen in price. Forget about Alaskan King Crab—I'm talking about blueclaw crabs. They're now three, four, and sometimes even five dollars a dozen!

IF YOUR MOUTH IS WATERING THE WAY MINE IS. All of this talk has brought visions to my mind of tender chunks of lobster, dripping with butter, crabs in spaghetti sauce, and jumbo shrimp with hot sauce. Oh please, don't torture me with these visions! Hold on, help is on the way in the form of crustacean culture. Now, I bet that up to this point our mariculture series has left you yawning. You probably said to yourself that it was very interesting, but would have little effect on you, right? But now the thought of farm-reared lobster at $2 a pound has perked your interest—right? Me too! It'll serve those lobster fishermen right! Don't be too quick to heap piles of anger on the people who harvest shrimp and lobster. It really isn't their fault that the price is so high. The law of supply and demand comes into play. Heavy pressure on the lobster, as well as pollution and heavy fishing pressure on shrimp has reduced their numbers. Lobsters, for example, grow slowly (it takes about five to eight years before a lobster, living in the wild, reaches legal size) which makes it hard for nature to replenish the resource as fast as men remove it. Lobstermen who have been around for a long time will tell you that large lobsters are very few and far between. Years ago they say, they frequently came up with large ones. The reason is that so many lobsters have been harvested that pretty much the only lobsters in nature are the ones that are reaching legal size or which are less than legal size. However, people continue to demand lobsters and shrimp in the fish market; thus, the price goes up. If lobsters were $1.50 a pound, it would not be profitable to fish for them. Therefore, the fisherman charges more for fewer lobsters and is able to stay in business. The same is true for shrimp.

WILL CRUSTACEAN MARICULTURE REPLACE THE FISHERMAN? No, this isn't likely—at least not for a long, long, time. Crustacean culture research is more likely to produce spin-offs that will enhance the natural fishery. Crustacean culture, especially lobster culture, will probably always take too much room and be too expensive to replace the natural fishery. However, we may be able to develop genetic strains of lobster that grow more quickly and/or produce more offspring, thus allowing Nature to replenish the resource faster. If the price does tumble, it will only be because there are more lobsters. In such a situation, the natural harvester would continue to fish because lower price plus more lobsters would equal the same income. Crab culture will probably become feasible in the near future. Crabs can tolerate crowding whereas lobsters do not. Crabs can tolerate water that is more polluted, while lobsters cannot. Crabs grow more quickly and are very productive, while lobsters grow slowly. I doubt that we'll be able to culture Alaskan King Crab because of temperature and depth requirements, to say nothing of their large size, but blueclaws and other types of edible crabs seem good prospects for the future. Successful blueclaw cultivation will depend upon the establishment of shellfish leasing procedures in key states such as New York, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Crab farms will require the use of sections of estuarine bottoms to be successful. Much the same is true for shrimp farming.

SHRIMP FARMING! DuPont, the people who also make fishing line among a host of other products, has pioneered some interesting research on shrimp farming. They developed a special plastic netting material that is strong, non-toxic, easy to work with, and relatively inexpensive. The scientists were able to use the netting to fence in an area of ocean. Inside they put the shrimp—safe from predators and secured from escape. Inside these pens, the shrimp can be force fed and their growth rate and health monitored. Although DuPont reports great success with the initial studies, the work is still in the early stages of development and it is not practical to farm shrimp for the goal of selling them at this time.

WHY HAVE SHRIMP BECOME LESS ABUNDANT? Shrimp are rather delicate animals and they tend to be somewhat sensitive to pollution which has increased in the Gulf States area. Perhaps the biggest danger of all, however, has been the development of these coastal states which has made tremendous inroads into the spawning habitats of the shrimp. Man has both a habit and a history of messing up his playgrounds. Technology has made it possible to develop these coastal states and to overcome the problems of insects, communication, swamps, and highways. Man moves in and he fills the swamps in order to build homes and industry. However, we forgot to ask the creatures of the sea whether or not that was okay with them. Perhaps, had we taken the time to study the situation before bringing in the bulldozers and steel, we might have found out that we were destroying crucial habitats for birds, fish, crustaceans, marine mammals, and many other animals. Perhaps, with a little more planning we could have developed without destroying by selectively surrendering less productive areas and jealously guarding highly productive areas. In the end, the sea cow, or manatee, which naturally frolics in the backwaters of Florida, are being carved and butchered by the propellers from outboard motors, channel bass stocks are declining, and there are fewer and fewer brackish coastal areas where the shrimp (actually a prawn) can spawn! So what do we do? We can't take down buildings and uproot families that are already there. However, we can put a moratorium on further construction and destruction of swamps and wetlands. We can also try to circumvent the effects of man by constructing new suitable areas where the shrimp can reproduce successfully. We were able to help the salmon by constructing ladders

to allow the salmon access to upstream sights when man destroyed the natural stream route, and I suppose we can do something for the shrimp.

THE LOBSTER IS ANOTHER CHALLENGE ENTIRELY. We have the ability to raise lobsters through all of the stages of their life cycle in labs or on a farm. However, it is not economical to do so at this time for the following reasons. First, the life cycle of the lobster is a long one and it takes an average six-and-a-half years for a lobster to reach market size of about three inches across the carapace. Second, the lobster is a cannibal and unless they are maintained in individual chambers, they will eat each other when they molt or shed. Third, we have not yet identified the best food for the lobster, although they will eat almost anything. With these limitations, perhaps we should give up on the idea of farming lobsters. This may be true except that we haven't mentioned that there is an advantage to playing with lobsters. Lobsters, as it turns out, have fairly flexible genetics.

SO HOW WILL WE CULTURE THE LOBSTER? The news isn't all bad. A number of studies have shown that the growth rate of the lobster can be altered and the life cycle as well. By maintaining the water temperature at around 20° Centigrade, or 68° Fahrenheit year-round, it was possible to produce a legal lobster in about two years. However, higher temperatures mean more disease-causing animals, more stress for the lobsters (which prefer cooler water), and an increase in fouling organisms that add to the expense of farming. The fouling animals must be removed unless the lobster eat them and more attention has to be paid to monitoring for disease and stress. By far the most expensive aspect of farming lobsters will be the need to keep them in separate cages. Even if it becomes feasible to rear lobsters in a single year, the need for individual homes for each lobster will mean that the cost of the lobster will remain very high. Scientists have talked about the idea of seeding certain bottom areas with juveniles once we develop strains that grow quickly. However, stocking must be done very carefully. Only so many lobsters can survive in a given area of bottom. If you crowd them, the loss due to cannibalism will be very high.

BLIND LOBSTERS! Recently, Dr. Anthony D'Agostino and Dr. Milton Welt have revealed the results of some very interesting research that they have been doing at the New York Ocean Science Lab at Montauk. They found that when they removed the eyes and the stalk of the eyes from lobsters that they can grow up to three times as fast. Now that may sound terrific, but there are some problems. One of the problems is that although removing the eye stalks removes a gland that produces a hormone which slows growth, the stalks also contain other tissues that produce substances that are needed by the lobster for a normal metabolism. Thus, the blind lobsters rarely live longer than a few months and the longer they live, the more out of normal shape they become. Furthermore, the blind lobster is less aggressive and if seeded into the wild, would not survive competition from other lobsters and predators. Nonetheless, the study holds significance as the first definitive advance in hormonal manipulation of lobster life cycles for commercial purposes.

NEW STRAINS! The best approach may be genetic manipulation. We know that we can play with the genetics of lobsters the way we have cattle, poultry, and vegetables. Thus, it may be possible to develop new strains that will be hardier, grow quicker, and may even have more tender meat. It was observed that sometimes a lobster is blue; blue lobsters, it has been found, grow more quickly than the normal red ones. After some years of study, it appears that the blue strain is not the answer, but it demonstrates the feasibility of developing hybrid lobster strains.

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Surf Side with Sal Russo

The DROPPER Part Two

Now that we know something about the fish-catching ability of the dropper, let's get the tools and materials together to tie our own creations. (Photo #1 shows the basic tools and materials required.) As mentioned in Part I, the most difficult item to obtain will be a supply of good quality hackle from four to six inches in length. If you are ordering from a mail order supplier, ask for saddle hackle. These are the feathers that come from the back of the chicken, the section just in front of the tail. The neck hackle is usually shorter—not of sufficient length to tie saltwater droppers. Also, order an assortment of your favorite colors. Most mail order houses can supply almost any color; some will even dye a special color on request. If you have an opportunity to pick your own feathers, try to pick the ones with the least amount of fluff at the base of the feathers. A little of this fluffy part of the feather is needed to give body to the dropper; too much, though, indicates that it is poor quality feather. Freshwater fly tyers usually strip this fluffy part away as it adds bulk and wind resistance to the fly, making it difficult to cast. This will not be our problem when using it in conjunction with a plug, as the weight of the lure carries the dropper easily. The hook should not be a problem to obtain. The two most popular patterns used are Eagle Claw 254SS and Mustad 34007—both are stainless steel. Again, 3/0 to 5/0 are good sizes. Thread should be a good quality nylon. I find "A" thread ties well with this size hook; "C" or "D" thread may be used for the larger hooks. Color is optional and all colors are available. If you wrap your own rods, you should have a good supply on hand. A "bobbin" (that's the tool that holds the thread) is not necessary, but I find it very convenient and helpful when tying flies. A good serviceable bobbin may be purchased for about three dollars. A vise of some sort is needed to hold the hook steady. If you intend to buy a fly tyers vise, don't buy an expensive one. They are made for the freshwater fly tyer using smaller hooks. If you force a large hook into the jaws, you will "spring them" and possibly ruin the vise. The Thompson "F" vise would be a good inexpensive vise to start with. The one I am using in the photos was purchased many years ago for about three or four dollars. I am sure the price has gone up, but it is still as serviceable as the day I bought it. I first started tying with a small portable bench vise purchased at the "five and ten cent store"—remember them? If you have a bench vise in your work shop, use that. A single edge razor or small pair of scissors are needed to trim the excess feathers and thread. And some five minute epoxy will complete the list of required tools.

We are now ready to tie. Secure the hook in the vise, giving yourself clearance to tie comfortably. Make a half-dozen turns with the thread behind the hook eye. Tie on a half hitch to hold the thread (see photo #2). This is where I find the bobbin helps. The weight of the bobbin holds the thread securely and the tube built into the bobbin gives you greater control and speed when winding the head of the dropper. In the model I am using, tension is applied to the thread by hand pressure to the sides of the bobbin. Select from four to five feathers of equal size and the same color. You will find that they have a natural curve inward, with the glossy side of the feather on the outside. Place the feathers one on top of the other with the glossy part out and the tips of the feathers together. Hold the small bunch of feathers parallel to the back side of the hook shank with your left hand, with about one-half inch of the fluffy part of the feather behind the hook eye. With your right hand, make several turns with the thread securing the feathers to the shank of the hook. Now a half dozen tighter turns and a couple of half hitches. You can now let go of the feathers with your left hand. Position them so that they are all on the outer side of the hook and parallel to the shank of the hook. Trim the excess fluff and stems of the feathers with the razor or scissors behind the eye of the hook. Be very careful not to cut the thread you are tying with (see photo #3). Select an equal amount of feathers of the same color as in the first step and repeat the process of placing them together. Hold this bunch with the left hand against the opposite side of the hook shank—that is the bare part now facing you. The glossy part of the feather out and the tips even with the tips of the first bunch of feathers, with the right hand, start to make your turns. Tightening the thread and placing a couple more half hitches to secure the feathers; again, trim the excess fluff and stems from the feathers and move the feathers about with your fingers so that they look symmetrical. When you are satisfied, start winding the thread over the cut stubs of feathers. Wind evenly, building up the head to about one-quarter to three-eighths inches in length and tapered to the eye of the hook. Keep it clean behind the hook eye; try not to make it bulky and large. Another couple half hitches to tie in the thread, clip the thread close, and you are almost finished. Put your first creation aside and tie another. Keep tying. You will find that you start to get a feel for it. The more you tie, the better you get. When you have a half-dozen finished, mix a small batch of five minute epoxy. Just enough for what you tied. Don't mix too much. Mix the epoxy until it begins to jell. Then you must work fast before it becomes too hard to work with. If applied too loosely, the epoxy will run into the eye of the hook. Check to see that it doesn't. If allowed to dry there, it will be difficult to remove. The epoxy may be applied with the tip of a toothpick. Place it on evenly, coating the thread on the head. Set this batch aside to dry. One way of doing this is to stretch a line between two points, place the bend of the hook on the line so that the head hangs down. You have just completed your first droppers.

Now to rig the dropper to the end of your fishing line, whether using spinning or conventional tackle: tie on a sturdy barrel swivel—a 3/0 would be good. On the other eye of the same barrel swivel, tie on approximately twenty-four inches of forty pound test leader material. Put a snap on the end of this leader to facilitate changing of plugs. Or you may tie the plug directly to the end of the leader. On the same eye of the barrel swivel that the leader is tied to, tie on a piece of fifty pound stiff leader material. The other end of this second leader is tied to the dropper. About six inches of leader should suffice between barrel swivel and dropper. All ties are made with the improved clinch knot. Looking at the eye of the barrel swivel where the two leaders are attached, see that the longer leader lies in a straight line with the barrel of the swivel and the fishing line. Now push the knot of the shorter leader up the eye of the barrel swivel so that it stands at about a ninety degree angle to the longer leader. (See photo #4.) Check this ninety degree angle occasionally when casting and you will find that the dropper will rarely tangle with the plug or line. The action of the plug and the retrieve speed are given according to the style of plug or lure being used. Vary these as you would normally do when fishing.

When arriving at the beach and ready to make that first cast, approach the edge of the water and make that first cast while still on the beach. Don't plow into the water as far as you can to make that first cast. The fish may be lying and feeding in the shallow water and a couple of size ten clad wader feet will spook them a mile down the beach. Don't lift the lure out of the water when completing your retrieve. Work it until you see or feel the lure on the beach. You may be scared half to death some quiet night when a cow bass slams that dropper at your feet.

That should cover all the basics on how to tie and fish the dropper. If you feel that you want to add some appeal to the newly made droppers, eyes may be

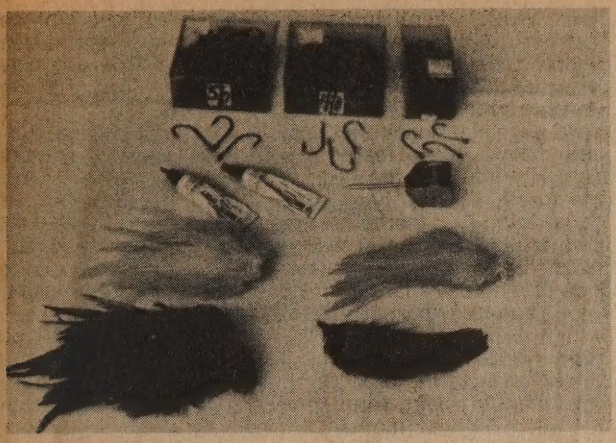

PHOTO 1. The basic tools and materials needed to tie the dropper, add a razor or small scissor.

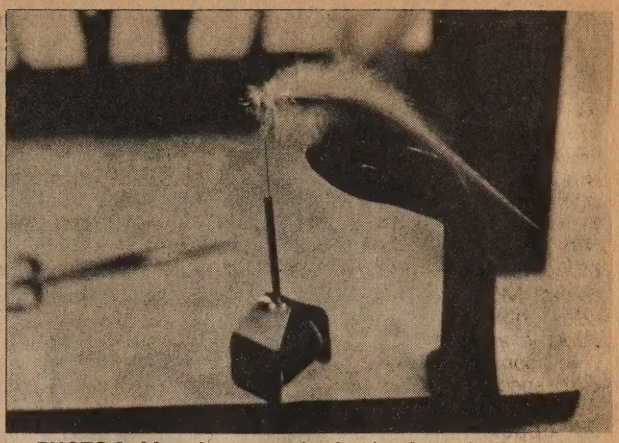

PHOTO 3. After the excess feather is trimmed off.

PHOTO 2. The proper way to secure the hook into the vise and initial tie with thread.

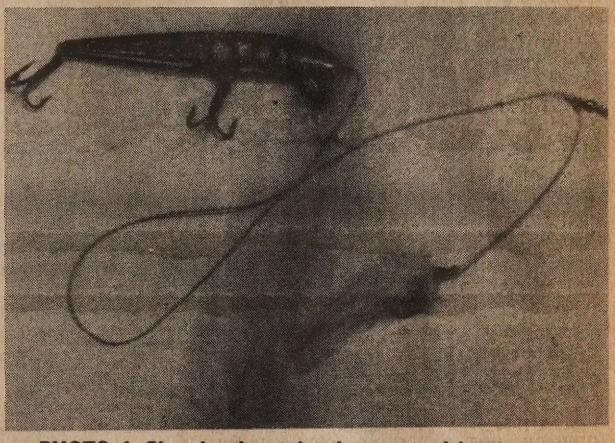

PHOTO 4. Showing how the dropper and lure are connected to the fishing line.

painted on the heads. This is done after the epoxy has dried on the heads. A few strips of Mylar may be added for "flash." Mylar is a metallic colored plastic that will not tarnish in saltwater. It also is available from many mail order houses in different widths; 3/32" is what I use. The time to add these Mylar strips is before you build up and taper the head of the fly with the thread.

A plastic compartmented box is handy to carry an assortment of droppers. This keeps them from tangling and the feathers from breaking. One other very important point: sharpen that dropper hook. Hone it needle sharp as you should with all your hooks. The bass will many times just suck the dropper in. If you feel like you have hung onto a piece of seaweed—sock it! It may be that fifty pound cow you have been looking for.

With the winter upon us and the coming season to look forward to, try tying some dropper flies to experiment with this year. You may find yourself into a very enjoyable and satisfying new hobby.

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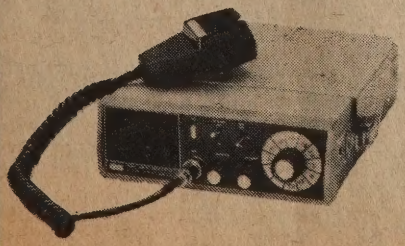

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Sinker Bouncing

with Matt Ahern

How-To Fillet Flounder

This is the last in a series of "how-to" articles and what better way to finish than by discussing the fine art of flounder filleting. Certainly, the flatties will be biting shortly—perhaps you are one of those jump-the-gun anglers who have already scored. If so, good for you. You deserve every one of your fish and are to be congratulated. Only another "nut" who knows what it means to sit out there in a skiff at this time of year realizes what misery you endured. But now the question is: what are you going to do with those fish? Are you going to go all through that scaling and gutting only to discover, as so many have before you, that no matter how carefully prepared, throat-gagging bones are your only reward? I don't blame you for giving the jaundiced eye to the next batch of flounder you catch. I used to feel like that too—but no more. I haven't worried about fish bones in years, and especially was knowing how to fillet important when my kids were small. They could dig in to their hearts' content—and they sure did, for who can resist the ambrosia-like flavor of a wiggle-fresh flounder? The old saw about peanut eating came in a poor second in my household. Yes, learning how to fillet is well worth the effort. I know, though, that if you've already attempted to fillet flounder (or fluke(the chances are quite possible that your results left much to be desired. Or perhaps you've been told not to waste your time—that flounder filleting is best left to the commercial experts. Not so.

I can tell you what I think causes most discouragement: the lack of patience and the desire for speed. We've all seen these minute-per-fish experts with their flashing knives. It looks so easy. And of course, it is—but only after a great deal of time has been expended. The old saw has it that Rome wasn't built in a day, and you can certainly apply that to flounder filleting. Don't expect to attain the filleting finesse these experts possess without first putting in much time and effort.

This probably sounds like I'm hell-bent to discourage you, too. But actually all I'm doing is trying to make you aware that in the beginning flounder filleting can be frustrating; but this is only because fishermen attempt to make speed when, in fact, they should take their time and proceed slowly. I guarantee you speed, but only when experience is gained—not before.

If you faithfully follow the instructions I'm about to set down, fear not, you will get a perfect job. Nothing you will read from now has been written without good reason. Each step should be completed exactly as described, for the success of each succeeding step depends upon how well you did on the one before. Take your time and study each bit of detail and photo. Don't rush through the text in your zeal to get started. Remember, slow and easy wins the race.

The most important bit of advice I can give you when attempting to fillet is this: use the proper knife. Don't try to get professional results with a kitchen reject, or an old rusty bait knife. Use professional tools if you wish to turn out a professional-looking job. Return the reject to the kitchen drawer, the bait knife to your tackle box where it belongs, and jump in the car and pay a visit to the nearest tackle shop.

You'll probably find an array of various qualities. Buy the best you can afford. Not only is a fine knife a pleasure to use, it will give you years of service. And don't be conned by good-looking handles. You are going to fillet with the blade—not the handle. Good knives contain steel that can be honed to razor sharpness with little effort. Cheaper knives contain steel that seldom keeps an edge for long, which means you will be spending more time sharpening and re-sharpening than you should. Without a keen edge going for you, your filleting will take much longer than necessary. This is another reason fishermen become discouraged.

You will notice in the photos that a cutting board is used. Go and do likewise. Forget newspaper. It will only cling to the wet fish and drive you up the wall. The dimensions of the board are 14x8x2. I find this size best for handling flounder. I've also filleted some good sized fluke with it—say up to five pounds.

A fine-grit carborundum stone should be on hand. (Notice the photos.) Use it after every three or four fish, or whenever you accidentally strike bone.

It is also a good idea to have a container of water handy. (There is one being used in the photos, but it is out of sight.) Dip the knife at intervals to remove those bits of flesh, etc., that cling to the blade's edge and cause tearing of the fillet. You should do this especially when skinning—this helps avoid cutting through the skin.

Okay? All set? Then let's fillet your first flounder.

Photo One. Place your flounder on board exactly as shown. Make a diagonal slice, starting at the shoulder and follow through to the opposite side, skirting the gut cavity. You can feel this with your fingers. Don't use too much pressure at any time. Slice to bone only, never through it.

Photo Two. Starting at the shoulder again, make a cut about a half-inch in from the fin line, following the length of the fish to the tail. Try to do this with one continuous slice. Then insert the knife point at the shoulder where the cuts meet. You'll feel the blade slip in place. With your free hand, lightly hold the fish down at the head and begin to slice along the skeleton, holding the knife at an angle. As you proceed, lift the loosened fillet aside so that you may watch and guide the blade.

Photo Three. When the blade reaches the center backbone, continue this cut to the tail; then lift the blade at a 45° angle and continue to the opposite side to the fin muscles. The fillet is now free—just cut off.

Photo Four. Now turn flounder over, with head toward you. This time make the diagonal cut on the right side of the head, ending just below the pectoral fin near the gill cover. Then cut straight across, again skirting the gut cavity.

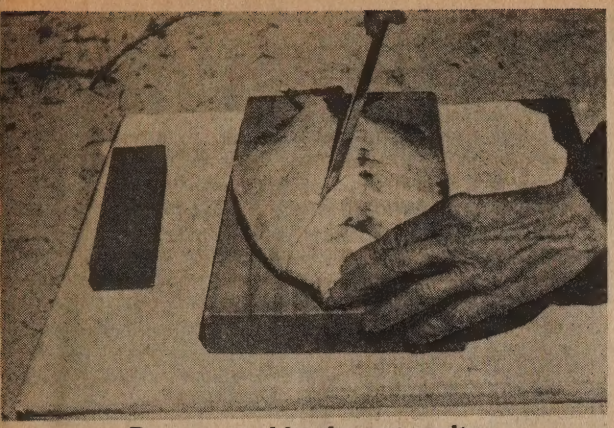
Photo Five. Make a slight inward cut across the tail and begin slicing here. Work toward the head, lifting the fillet as you go along. On this side, it isn't necessary to make the long cut along the length of the fish as you did on the bottom side.

Photo Six. Following along fin line to the shoulder cut, keeping the blade almost flat as you slice. Once again, slide over the backbone as before and work the knife to the opposite side and remove the fillet. You have just filleted your first flounder!

Photo Seven. Now for the skinning—a simple, easy process. Wet the knife, hold the fillet at the tail, skin side down, and make a shallow cut about a half-inch in; careful, don't go through. This will be your handle. Grasp the skin firmly, hold the knife at an angle and pull against the blade with short, sideways motions. The skin will easily peel off.

Photo Eight. You have just completed the job and have turned out two slices of mouth-watering flounder fillet.

I know these instructions sound easier to accomplish than they actually are. But they won't be once you gain a little experience. Practice a few times, expect to mangle a fish or two, and in no time at all, you'll be able to breeze through a batch of flounder in short order. Guaranteed!



Be sure to skirt the gut cavity.

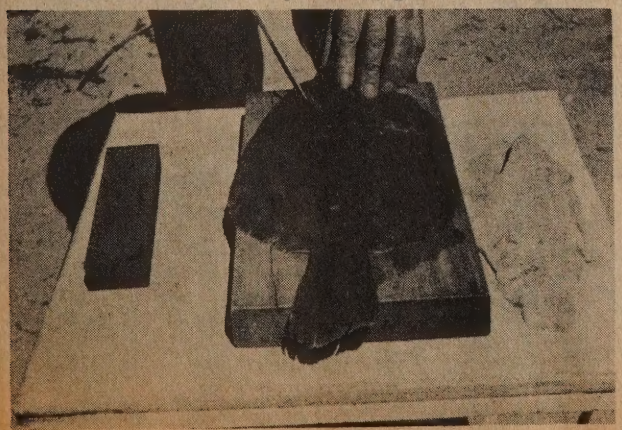
Hold knife almost flat for this cut.

Try to do this slice with one continuous cut.

The last step.

Lift fillet aside so you may guide the knife.

Kinning is easy—*don't make it difficult.*



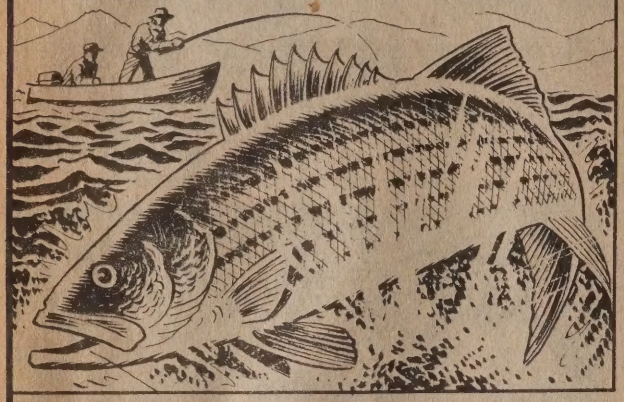
Be sure not to cut through bone.

The result—two mouth watering fillets!

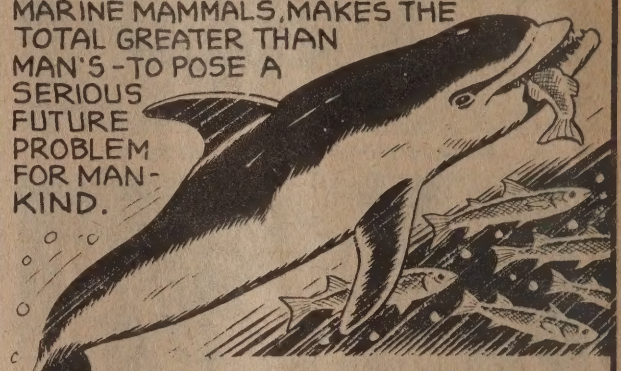
FISHING REPORTS

BY FRED GUARDINEER

STRIPED BASS, ON AN EAST COAST DECLINE, ARE EXPLODING IN FRESH-WATER IMPOUNDMENTS SUCH AS LAKE MEAD, ARIZONA, PRODUCING HEALTHY 10-15 LB. BASS STOCKED FROM 1969 TO 1972.



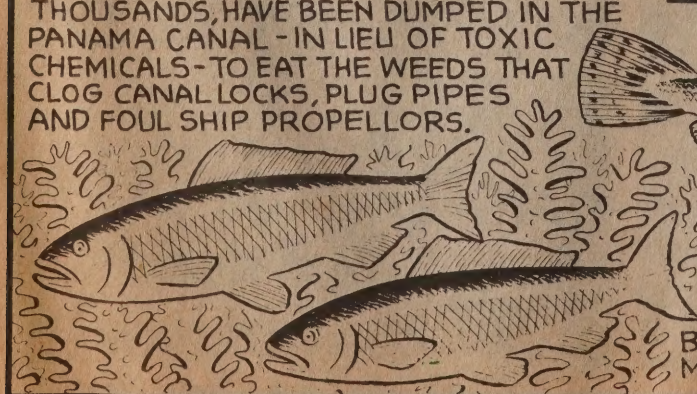
PORPOISE PROBLEMS! THE WORLD HUMAN POPULATION EATS 50 MILLION TONS OF FISH PER YEAR - AN ESTIMATED 28 MILLION PORPOISES, EACH EATING 10 LBS. OF FISH PER DAY, CONSUME 47 MILLION TONS OF FISH. ADD SEALS AND OTHER MARINE MAMMALS, MAKES THE TOTAL GREATER THAN MAN'S - TO POSE A SERIOUS FUTURE PROBLEM FOR MANKIND.



SALT WATER FISHING LICENSES ARE BEING CONSIDERED BY SEVERAL STATES TO SUPPORT FISH RESEARCH. AS FISH PRICES RISE, MORE AND MORE SPORT FISHERMEN ARE SELLING THEIR CATCHES SO THERE WILL BE EFFORTS TO LICENSE THIS MARKETING, REPORTS THE AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY.

FISH NETS ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY ON THE SOUTH SHORE OF LONG ISLAND AS "SPORT" FISHERMEN WAIT IN LINE FOR NETS TO DRAG BEHIND THEIR BOAT FOR FLOUNDER AND FLUKE IN THE SHALLOW BAYS - *ESPECIALLY MORICHES* - AND IT'S ALL LEGAL! OR IS IT?

CHINESE GRASS CARP, BY THE THOUSANDS, HAVE BEEN DUMPED IN THE PANAMA CANAL - IN LIEU OF TOXIC CHEMICALS - TO EAT THE WEEDS THAT CLOG CANAL LOCKS, PLUG PIPES AND FOUL SHIP PROPELLORS.

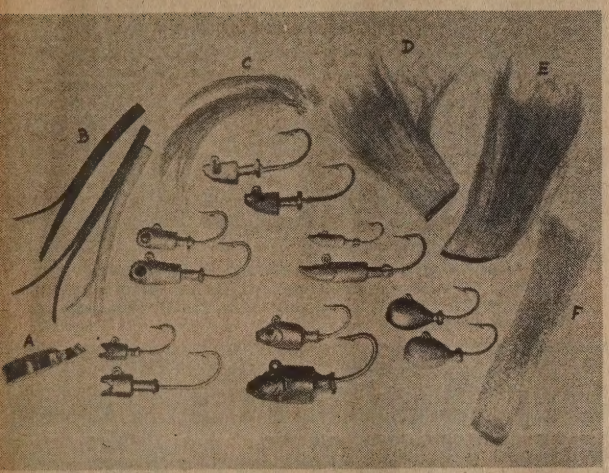


TOM COD

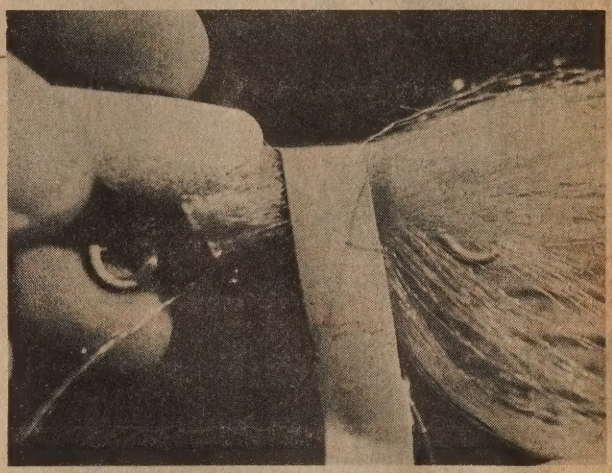
BEST FISHING DAYS IN MARCH WHEN THE MOON IS BETWEEN *NEW* AND *FULL* ARE MAR. 1 - 13 AND MAR. 27 - APR. 12

TINKER TACKLE

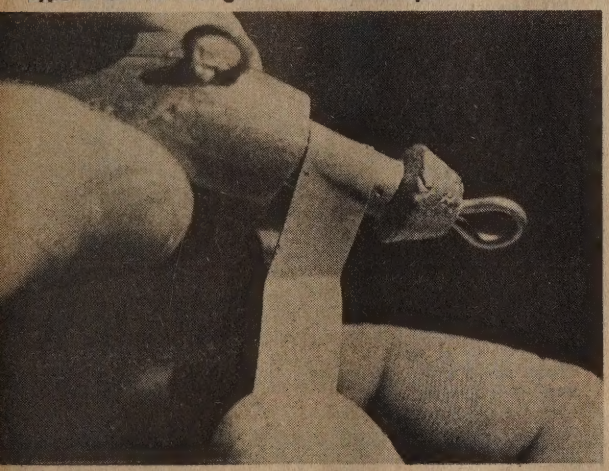
Part Two—*by Dick Mermon*



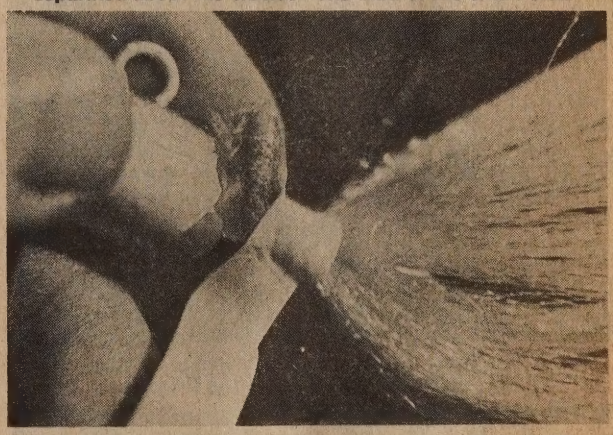
Tinker Toys by *TRI-FIN LURES* vary in size, weight, shape, color and type of material to imitate every type of baitfish that gamefish will feed upon.



A second bit of hair is applied in position and wound tightly as the first was. This time the strands are slightly separated about the crevice—one-third of the entire area.

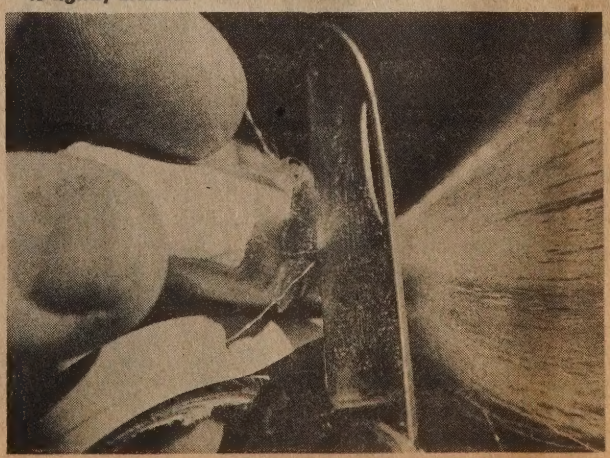


Plastic tape is wound once in the crevice of a Deep Jigging Head, locking the end under.



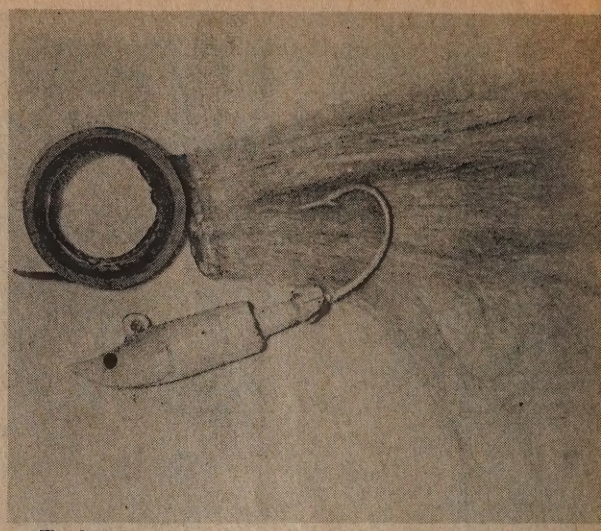
The third and final strip of Dynel is positioned so it will fill the gap when fastened, making sure that the ends extend over the rear part of the head itself before the tape is tightly affixed.

A pinch of Dynel is placed into the holding area of the head where the tape fastens it down. The first turn flares the hair outward, while a second wind locks all strands near the forward section in back of the head itself.

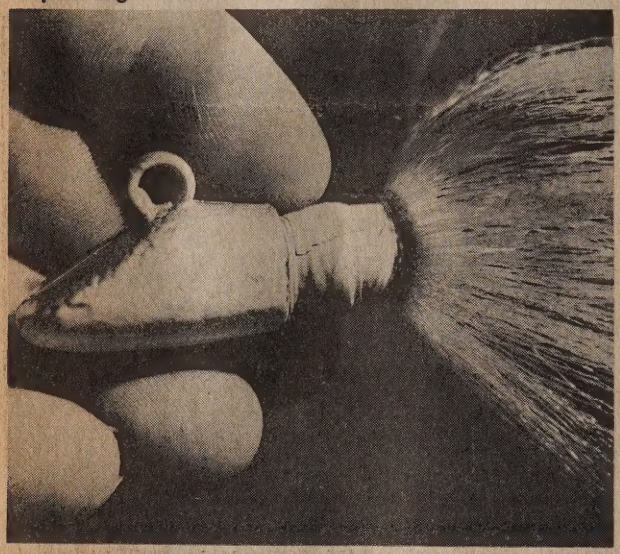


After the three strips of hair are fastened by the tape, all excess strands are cut from the lure's head at the forward area of the attachment.

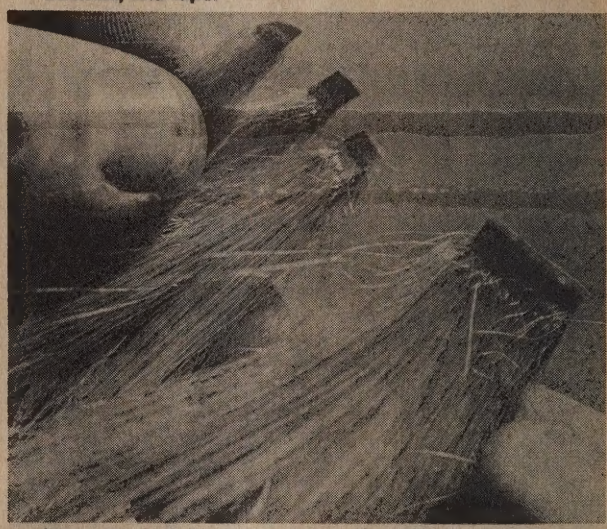
The tape is then wound several more times around the hair but not over the lip, as in feather lures. Long strands flare outward and then fall to a taper which produces a pulsating movement.



Flat heads or ones that are designed to be crawled along bottom, or over rocks have a special nose contour, whereby its body is formed with short fish hair or bucktail, and tape.

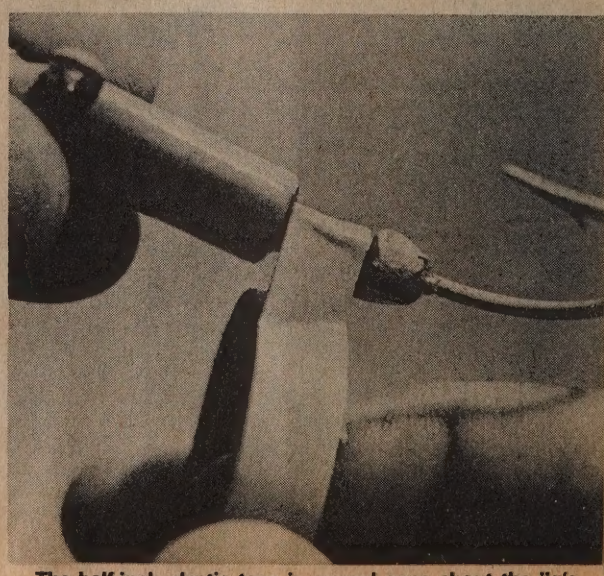


By pulling tight, the plastic tape stretches, bonding the Nylon securely and then it is cut free of the coil.

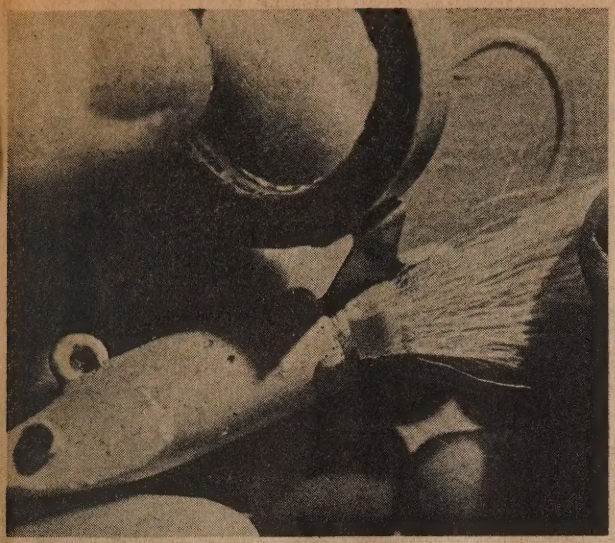


Since fish hair breathes almost as easily as bucktail underwater, it is simpler to carry the prefabricated one. Three small strips are broken away from the main piece and placed aside.

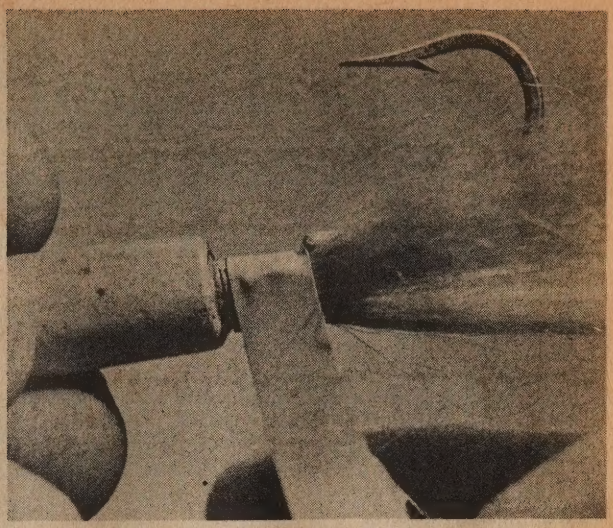
A bead chain hook or long shanked hook is attached in place, inside the skirted jig head and it becomes an instant enticer.



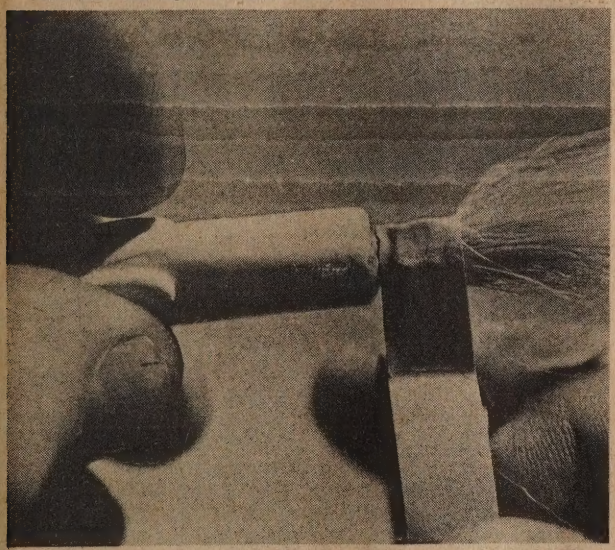
The half-inch plastic tape is wound once about the jig's indented area to hold the hair, clamping it fast.



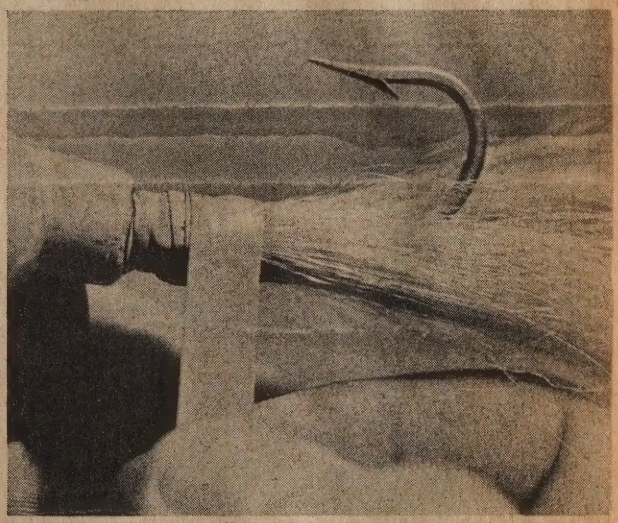
A snip of hair is placed under the tape, clinching it firmly in place. This first section is positioned at one side of the lure and the tape is wound over the hard end.



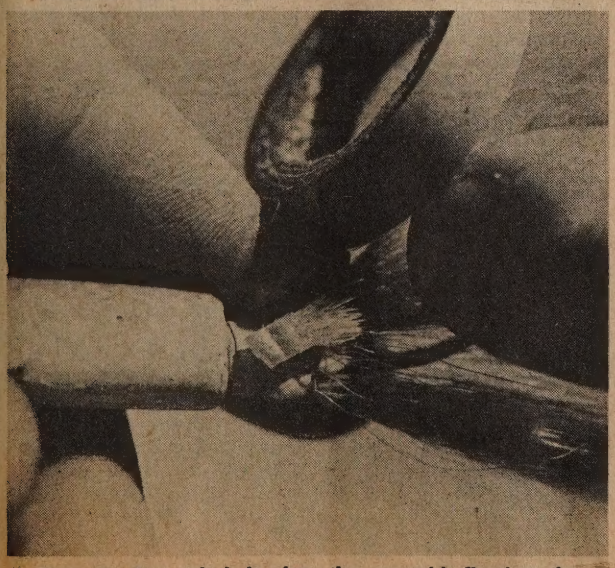
Each section of hair is fastened to the lead head by the tape encircling the hair's joining point. The third and final application is placed directly in line with the upright hook.



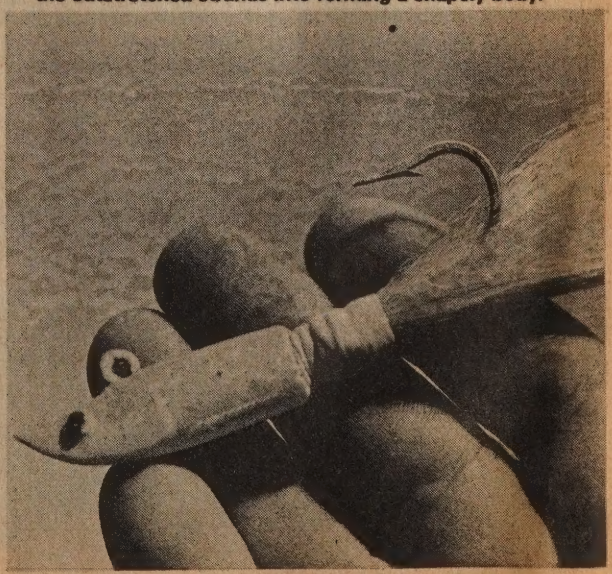
The first wind is very important, for the tape must be stretched taut, holding the small fastening in place.



When fastened down, the tape is circled several times over the hair's end and then once over the lead lip where it has flared the fish hair outward. This once-over closes the outstretched strands into forming a shapely body.



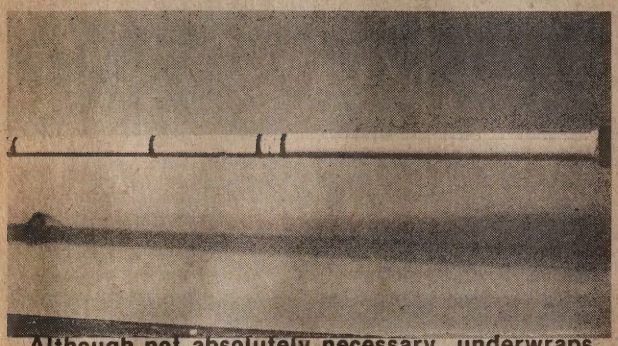
Once the first strip is in place the second is fixed on the head's opposite side so the hair lays parallel along the hook's shank. Two overlaps of tape will lock it tight.



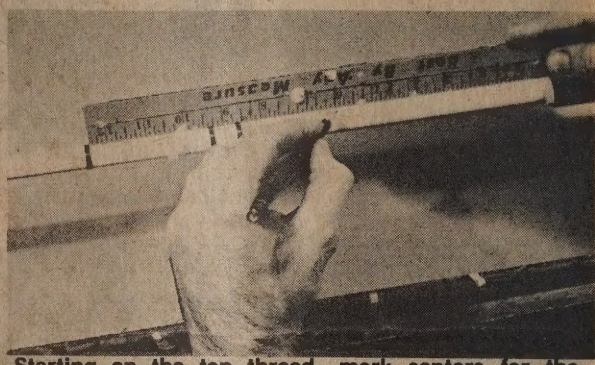
A few more turns about the crevice with the plastic tape and the flat bottom jig is for real.

BUILDING A DIAMOND WRAP

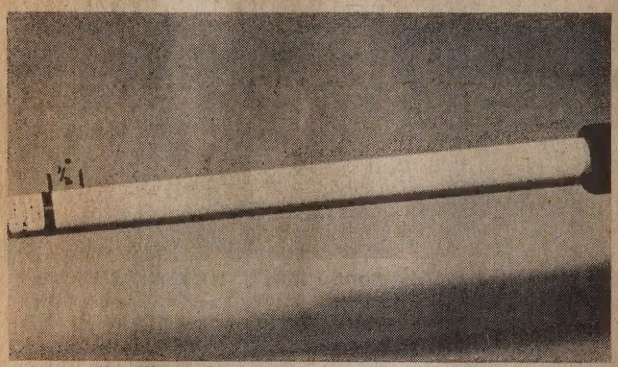
by Mike Trailes



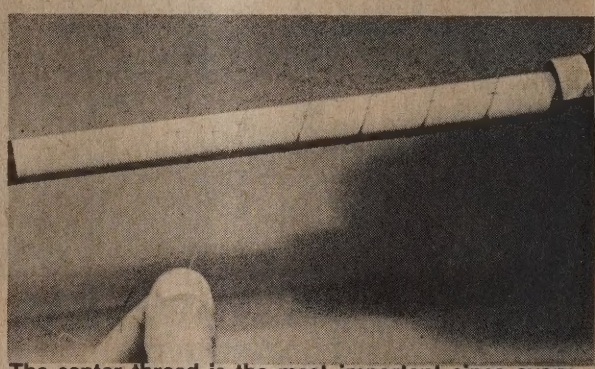
Although not absolutely necessary, underwraps prevent the diamonds from sliding. Tape a single thread to form a line along the exact top of the blank. Another thread is taped 180° at the bottom center line of the blank. These threads serve as a guide to mark the centers of the diamonds.



Starting on the top thread, mark centers for the diamonds. Spaces can vary to your tastes from 1/2" tight centers, to 1" or greater. One inch centers are the usual for nice, square diamond pattern, but the variations are endless.

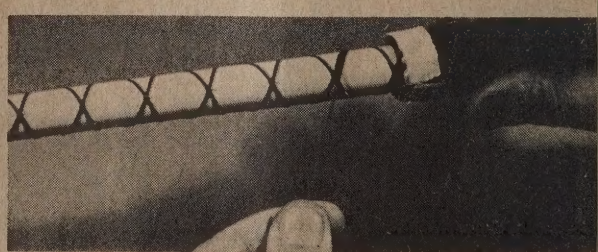


A pencil will mark small "x's" for diamond centers. Remember to mark the bottom of the rod with centers in the middle of the top row. Last wrap should be about 1/2" from the end of the underwrap.

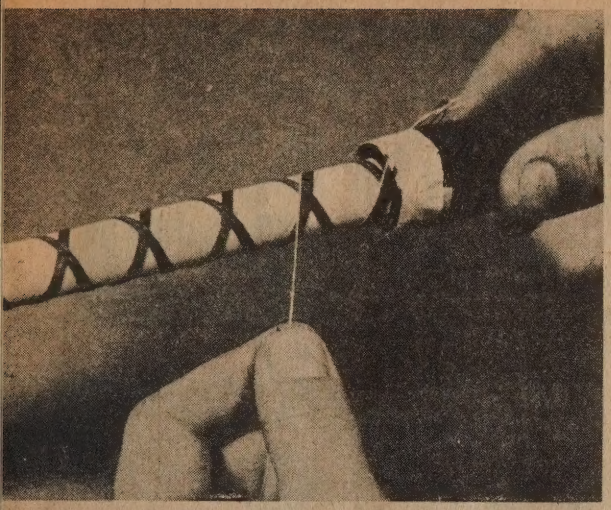


The center thread is the most important since every other thread that follows will use this first thread as a guide. Tape the thread to the fore grip to give you enough room to wrap down the blank when you finish off the wrap.

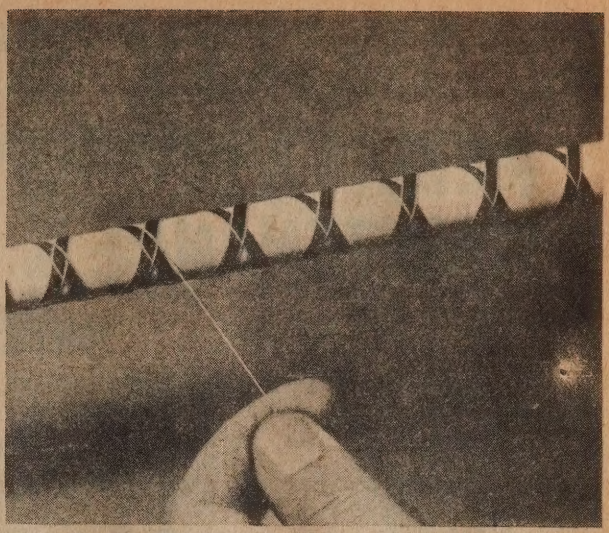
Rotate the rod and spiral the thread up the blank hitting every center mark. Wrap the thread down the blank crossing every center mark to form x crosses. Tape the end of the thread to the fore grip.



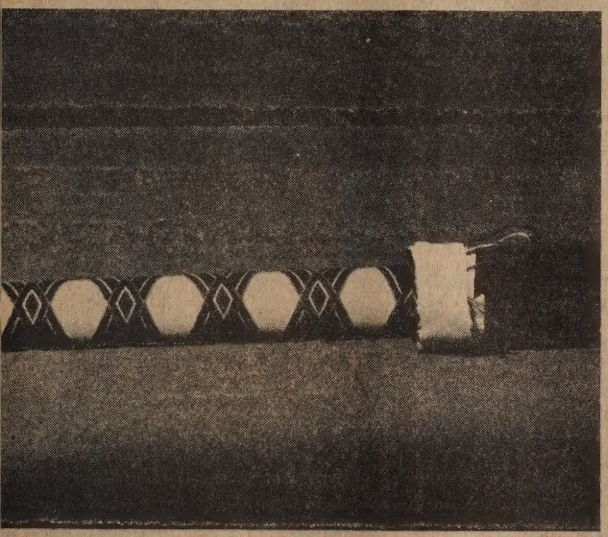
The diamonds are now built around the center thread. Remeber that whatever you put on one side of the center thread, you must put on the other side of the same thread. If you started with a light central thread, wrap a darker color with four threads to the right going up and down the blank and four to the left going up and down the blank. You can put these threads on one at a time, or cut pieces of about 2-3 feet and put up to four threads on at one time.



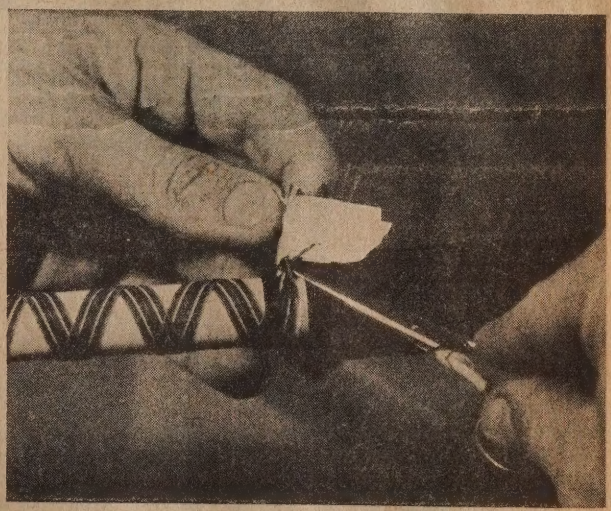
As many additional colors as you desire can be added until the diamonds are built up to the width and pattern you want. Here another lighter color is being added.



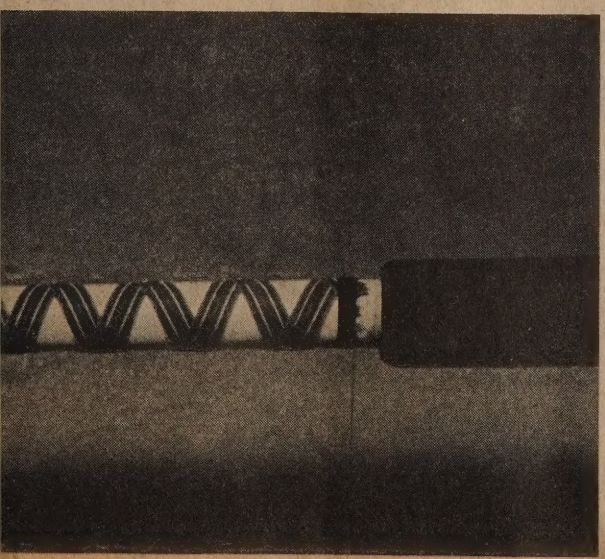
Again after finishing the right of the center line, you must lay a thread along the left side. The complete diamond is clearly visible in this photo.



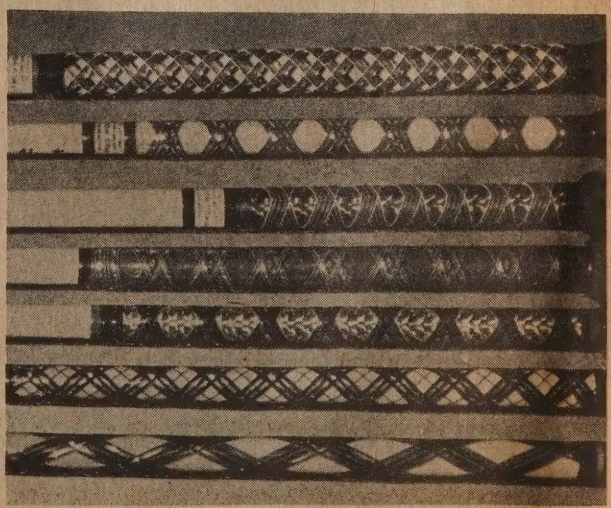
After as many colors and building up the width to the design you want, the finished diamond should look like this.



To secure the diamond, start a trim wrap an inch above the grip and use a lot of tension. Take about 15 turns toward the grip and begin removing the tag ends of the threads used to build the diamond.

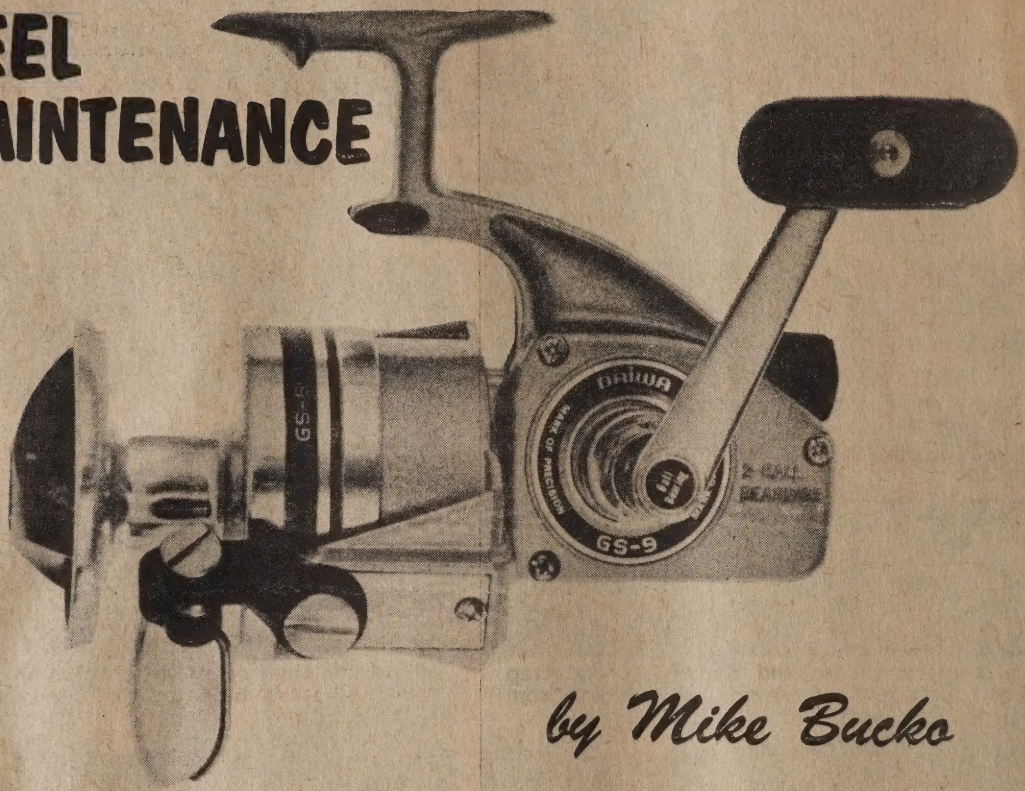


With threads trimmed, finish the trim wrap to the grip.



Once you have mastered the basics, you can let your imagination run wild! The variety is endless as you create your own patterns on your very own custom rods.

REEL MAINTENANCE



by Mike Bucko

The cold winter is now upon us, but the mild weather of spring is not far behind. It is time to think of the future and prepare for fishing strategy in '79. Hopefully your reel has been serviced and repaired during the winter months to prevent corrosion. If not, do it now.

I would like to talk to you about preventive maintenance for your reels. There are various classes of reels, such as spinning and conventional. We will talk first about conventional reels since they are the easiest to care for. You must be sure to replace a set of washers at the start of the fishing year. I recommend a mixture of Teflon and fiber in a two-to-one ratio. On a set of three washers, I suggest two fibers and one Teflon placed in the middle for best results. During the fishing year, the reels only need to be rinsed after fishing. If you plan not to fish for awhile, then loosen the star drag to ensure a longer life for the washers.

The spinning reel is probably the hardest to talk about, because there are many brands, designs, and materials used in today's market. Let's subdivide the spinning reels into three categories: internal spool, skirted spool, and automatic skirted spool reels.

I will first mention the common problems of any spinning reel. The first major problem is the bail spring. They all have a limited lifetime because of the tremendous tension strain in operating the bail. The more casting you do, the greater chances of breakage. You can spray WD-40 every time you fish which will help a bit. I recommend carrying a couple of extra bail springs in your tackle box, especially if you're a plug fisherman.

We can now talk about line rollers on spinning reels since all reels have one to wind in the line. As you wind the monofilament line, speed builds as it travels across the line roller and acts as a razor in cutting out your roller. Your grooved-out line roller will, in turn, cut your line as it becomes frayed. My best advice is to check your line roller often; if in doubt, replace it. It's cheaper to replace a fifty cents to a dollar roller, than a five to ten dollar line on your reel.

On internal spool spinning reels there is nothing more we haven't discussed, except to rinse often in fresh water to clean the sand that sometimes gets behind the spool.

Skirted spools will provide a better cast, although many are ambidextrous (left and right-handed). The design in which these handles are assembled will cause the locking screw to back off, allowing the handle to fall off the reel. As a precaution, add a drop of lock-tight to the screw. Automatic skirted reels require the same maintenance as does the skirted reel.

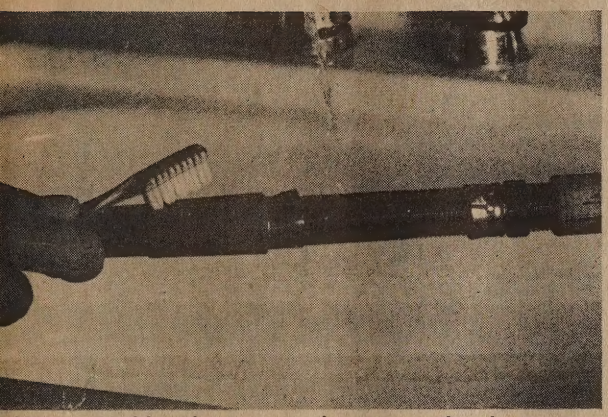
I would like to mention one other matter about proper weight line on a fishing reel. Always use the recommended line for your particular reel, because the gears are rated at a certain pound test breaking point. I believe it is better for the line to break than the gears in the reel. If the fish is big enough to strip the gears, you will most likely lose the fish anyway—so why not pick the better of two "evils" (the line)? Looking at this situation at a different point of view, fishing with the recommended weight line as the manufacturers suggest should not present a problem even if you catch a large fish. Why? Because every spinning reel comes with a drag system, which will release the line before it breaks. As the fish tires out, you can retrieve it.

I would like to sum up this article by saying preventive maintenance is a must to stop reel breakage while fishing, especially to an everyday fisherman.

For more information about preventive maintenance, your local repair station or tackle shop with repair service will be glad to help you.

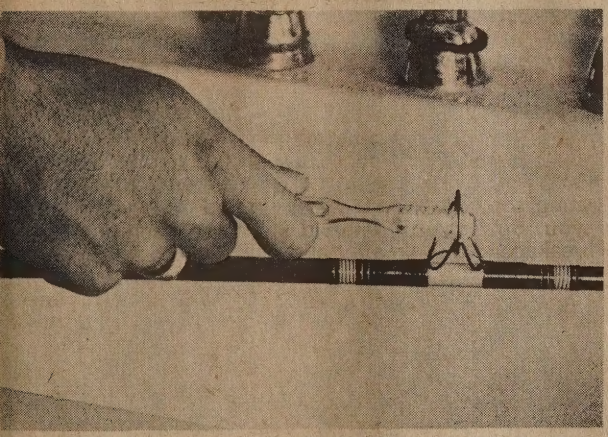
RESTORE YOUR FAVORITE ROD

by Pete Barrett



Use a toothbrush, soap and warm water to scrap dirty cork grips and remove grit and corrosion from rear seat.

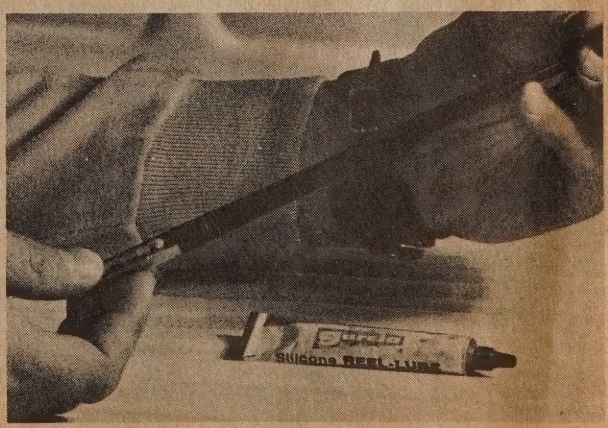
WD-40, or other spray preservative oil will prevent future corrosion. Be sure to get some oil up under reel seat hoods.



Scrub guides and wraps with toothbrush. If corrosion is too built-up, try a brass shotgun brush cleaner.

Touch-up wraps with epoxy, varnish or polyurethane finish. Let dry; then apply a light wax.

Clean ferrules with #00 steel wool until polished clean.



Apply a light coating of grease and wipe clean. Leave only a FILM of grease!

TUBES THAT GLOW

by Ken Gerhardt

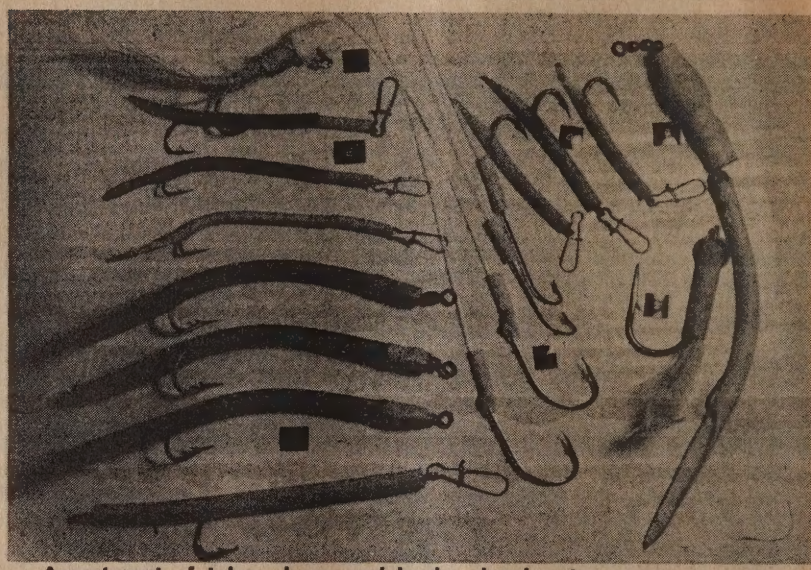
For quite a number of years now, we have had all sorts of colored tubing available as attractors or imitations in tubes, hooks, etc. Its material varied from latex (rubber) to vinyl. Various colors have, from time to time, been made available for our use, ranging from the original tan latex to the wide spectrum we have available today. Included in these are the fluorescents or "fire" colors. These have excellent uses down to forty feet for the reds, and to sixty feet for the blues. After this, the physics of water is such that all colors (including chrome) appear grey.

Now there is a virtually "magic" tubing available for our use today. This is the so-called Glow Tube. It is a phosphorescent tubing, which simply means when it it charged with existing light (sun, lamp or flashlight), it glows for up to four hours later. Sound interesting? Well, let's look at photo #1. You will see the tubing glowing in absolute darkness. Photo #2 shows the same components, only in normal room light. Kind of startling, isn't it?

Let's talk about some applications now. First we'll talk about hooks for bait fishing. In the author's experience, all bottom feeders are attracted to this glowing tubing. Don't, however, use too much, as this might be counter-productive. The list of fish that seemingly are attracted to the glow include the following: cod, pollack, whiting, ling, mackerel, porgy, sea bass, blackfish (tautog), flounder and fluke. For the smaller bottom fish, I use an inch of tubing pushed over the snelling knot on the hook. For the larger fish, cod, pollack, a little longer piece can be used (see drawing).

The next application is on tubes for jigging. All of the active bottom feeders—cod, pollack, whiting, as well as the bottom to mid-water feeders such as bluefish, stripers, mackerel, etc.—take these tubes two or three to one over the standard latex tubing, particularly when the water is deeper than forty feet. The tube is made on a Mustad #30122 surge tubing hook with all but one inch of the tube latex; the last inch with glow tubing. A Duo-Lock snap is used in the eye of the hook.

These tubes are absolute dynamite when used ahead of a diamond jig for either heave-and-haul or squidding.



Assortment of tubes, lures and hooks showing the many ways in which glow tubing can be used.

Glow tubing with lights turned on.

The next application is for diamond jigs. If you make your own jigs, the finish is relatively unimportant if the water is deeper than sixty feet. We simply cut a piece of the tubing the length of the hook on the jig and thread it on.

Recently, while on a codfishing trip with the editor aboard the Julie-C out of Point Judith, we ran into a school of cod "on" sand eels. Three of us caught twenty-three cod in an hour on jigs and tubes. Four of the cod were caught on bare 6/0 hooks with the tubing on them as described in application 1. About eighteen whiting were caught—twelve of them on a tube as described in application 2. Eleven of twelve cod were caught on the jigs described in application 3.

The following is a listing of some of the trips we took last year using the phosphorescent material on hooks, tubes, and jigs:

Sharks Ledge in May of 1978 on a

Saturday, while the other boats in the fleet were "picking," we landed 350# of whiting, 100# cod, and three 20# pollack on jigs and tubes.

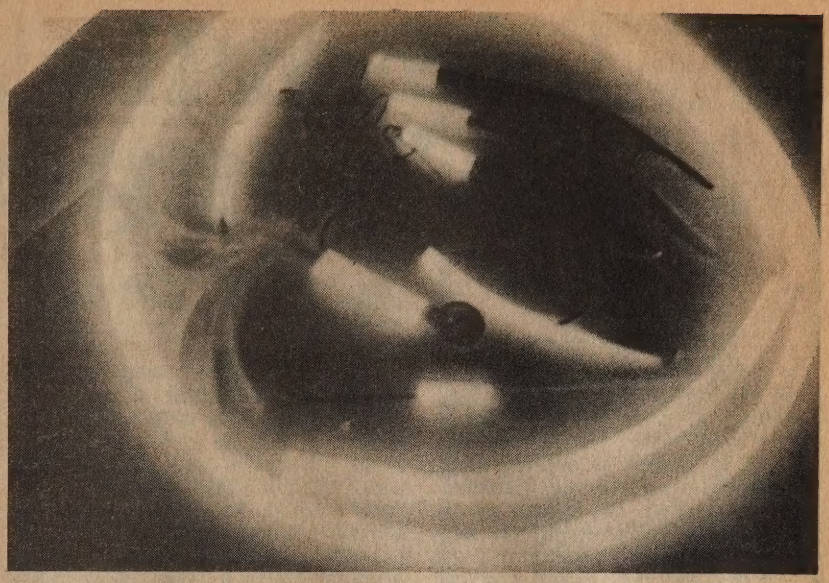
Sub Buoy the next week, sixteen cod to 22 lbs. on pencil jigs and tubes in three-quarters of an hour of slack tide, using the heave-and-haul method with a jig and tube with glow tubing.

Gin Beach towards Shagwong Point—seventy-five snowshoe flounders between 3# and 4¾# in two hours. We used three hook rigs with phosphorescent tubing as per application 1.

Off Race Point, Cape Cod Bay, Memorial Day—100 3-5# pollack jigging a jig and two tubes. The action was so fast that it took less than an hour to land all the pollack with many doubles and triples. Neighboring boats were just picking with a fish now and then. They were using standard mackerel trees.

Off Quonny Breachway, mid-July—200# of Boston mackerel, jigging with three tubes and a jig just off the bottom. Many doubles and triples were included. All the "regulars" using standard mackerel trees and were rewarded with maybe six or eight mackerel for the two hours or so the school was there.

The list goes on and on. It started when Larry Green of the West Coast wrote an article about its effect on striped bass in the middle fifties.



Same set of lures, but this time with the lights out. Quite a difference, to say the least.

The phosphorescent material was in the form of tape at that time, which made its application difficult. In the past two years, Midland Tackle, Rte. 17, Sloatsburg, N.Y. has had an exclusive on it in 3/16, 5/16 and 3/8 sizes. It is not cheap, with the smallest going for about $2.30 for a meter.

The possible application list is endless. A version (Cyalume tube) is used off Florida for night fishing down deep for swordfish. There are times, however, when these 'magic' tubes seem to work no better than the normal tube, but these days are in the minority. Some night I'm going to go out with the glow tubes and a flashlight south of Block Island—and who knows?

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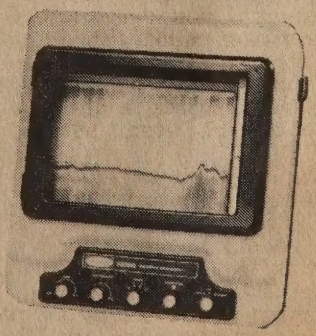

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Charlie *the* Chopper

by Bob Orrok

A school of large bluefish pushed their way northward at an easy pace, travelling at a comfortable depth, which was forty feet below the surface. In front, was one big brute of a blue who we will call "Charlie." He was leading the school north, following the mackerel which were in front of them. The cold water was a few degrees away from comfort, but the smell of mackerel kept pulling them along.

Straggling pods of mackerel would be pounced on by the blues like a pack of wild hungry wolves. Flesh and bone would be severed by teeth as sharp as carving knives, filling the water with the scent of blood and bits and pieces of flesh that slowly sank towards the bottom.

After the mackerel had been annihilated, the blues would dive, picking up the falling pieces, then returning to their comfort zone; school up and continue north. That's where Charlie was going and if they didn't follow him (as they had for years), he wouldn't lead them to food, as he always has.

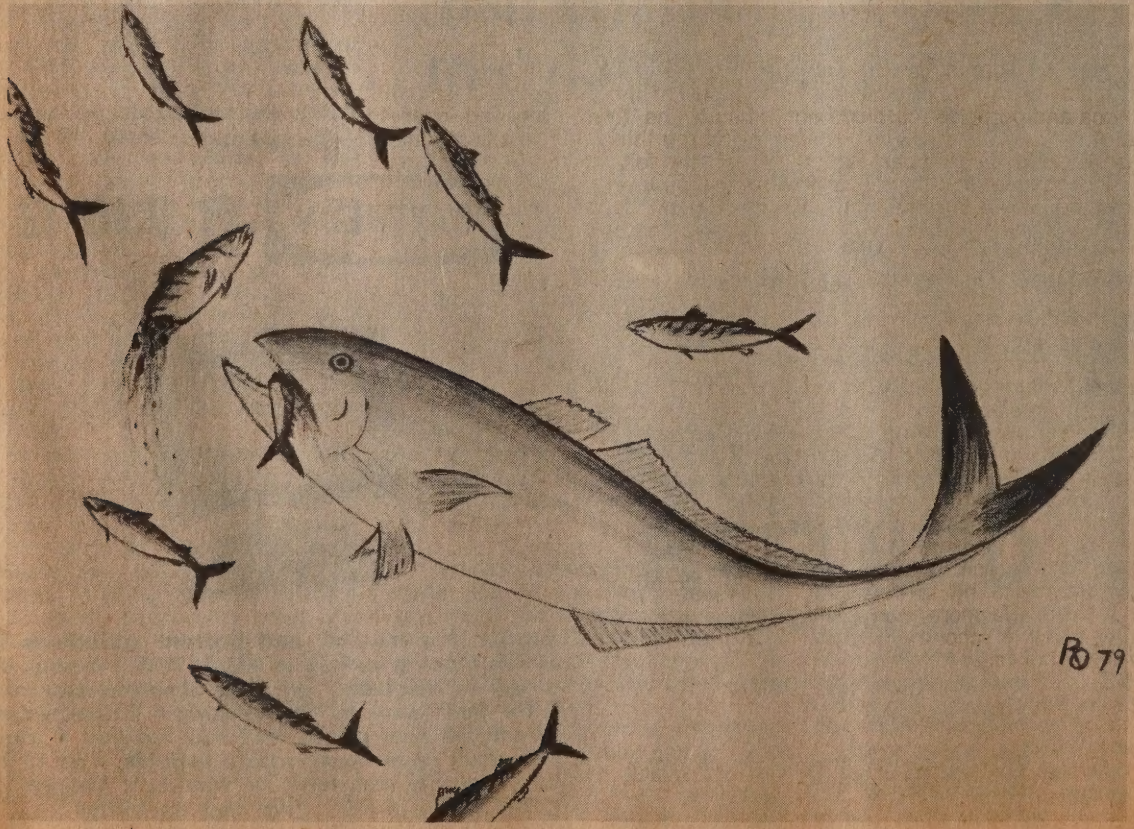
He was truly a giant of a blue: seventeen pounds of killer, pushing a set of nasty teeth through the water with a large forked tail. His body from its blue-green top to its silvery bottom, bore the scars of competitive feeding and a close encounter with a mako shark years earlier. His zest for killing and food hasn't changed since he was a snapper living on spearing in the Great South Bay.

His school, which numbered over four hundred, were all born the same year as him; but because of his skill in finding food, he was bigger than most of them. His strategies for procuring food always worked, coupled with his aggression and meanness. This is what it took to gain him his spot at the front of the school.

It was late May when the school was pushing its way up the Jersey Coast. Suddenly, a familiar smell stimulated his senses. Checking the water for a good, strong line to follow, he turned left, heading towards shore.

That night, the school caught up with the scent that had been getting stronger and stronger, leading to a large area of high bottom a few miles off Barnegat Inlet, known as the Barnegat Ridge. Just before visual contact was made, Charlie angled down towards the bottom and moved in front under the school of herring which were tightly packed.

At just the right second, he burst forward and up, hitting the herring only a few fish back from the front of the school, which numbered around one hundred fifty. Getting there first as he always does, he chomped down on a herring, hitting it halfway between the tail and the dorsal. As his powerful jaws closed shut, the teeth severed everything in-between. The front half of the herring squirted upward with a short trail of blood coming from the



amputated section. Squeezing into a tight, fast turn, he caught the front half of the herring head on, and took it down with only one bite.

All around him the water was filled with twisting, diving and jumping herring, with blues in close pursuit. The night air above was filled with splashing water, as the feeding turned into a killing frenzy. Everywhere, blues were racing at full speed, chopping at anything that got in front of them till there were no herring left in the area. Only a few had escaped the slaughter.

The water's surface was slick from the oils and blood of the massacre, while below, thousands of silver scales fluttered ever so slowly towards the bottom. Crabs gathered to feed on the tiny particles that floated down to rest on the sand.

Slowed down and re-grouped, the blues moved northeast as a school. Charlie was looking for more food because he knew there were members of his school that did not feed on the small pod of herring. Even though he ate one-and-a-half herring himself, he could still enjoy the kill, so others could eat.

It was a month later, while feeding on vast schools of squid at night, out near the shipping lanes, that the school ran into trouble. One minute all the blues were feeding on the succulent soft squid when all of a sudden, the water was filled with vibrations of fear.

Charlie saw a mako shark charge into the school of blues and chase half a dozen to the surface. In panic, the rest of the blues scattered, leaving their brothers on the surface to their fate. The mako is the only shark fast enough to catch a blue and the only creature besides swordfish, tuna and porpoise the blues are afraid of.

Charlie decided, from past experience, it was time to move inshore because he knew the mako would always be showing up and cutting down the numbers in the school.

Mid-summer on the Shrewsbury Rocks, was pleasant living for the blues. Plenty of small bergalls, sand eels and small rainfish to feed on. The school stayed put and continued to put on weight and fed with ease as August came and went.

September was a time Charlie liked, for he knew he could move over to the tip of Sandy Hook and ambush mullet as they came out of the Raritan. This they would do at night, pinning the small bait fish right to the beach. During these attacks the blues hit anything that moved. When no more mullet were to be found, the school moved back out to deeper water for the daylight hours.

One night, late in September, Charlie led his school towards Long Island, for he knew they would find small weakfish coming out of the inlets, following the bait fish. As they were driving in for an attack, Charlie felt strange vibes in the water he didn't like. He knew what it was, because twice before in his life he had encountered it.

Forgetting the weakfish as his survival instincts took over, he did a quick U-turn to swim away from this place of food and fear. As he turned, he saw the wall of translucent squares, a few feet away. Driving back through his brothers, he pushed hard to leave. Most of the school followed as sheep, but those who forged ahead in the quest for food, became entangled in the wall where there was no excape, for their gill covers were caught in the mesh.

Charlie led the rest of his school back out to deep water, then turned south, returning off the Coast of Jersey. Over the rocky bottom, the blues again fed around the clock.

It was mid-October when Charlie decided it was time to ambush bunkers along the beach. Half his school stayed, not wanting to leave all the easy food that drifted down from the surface every day and night. His school now numbered only eighty, but they were bigger and very strong. Charlie had grown over the summer, adding weight and length.

An enormous school of bunkers slid south with Charlie and his school under them. When hungry, the blues would rip into the bait fish, pick off a few, then fall back and just keep pace.

It was during one of these commando attacks that Charlie spotted a cripple near the surface. He drove up and crushed the bunker in his mouth on the first pass.

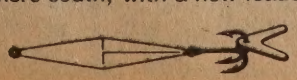
There was an instant pull on the side of his mouth. He swam away from the pull, but he couldn't rid himself of the pressure. Closing his mouth, he tried over and over to grind the thing that was stuck in his jaw. He felt no pain—only terror. Leaping clear of the water, shaking his head, he saw a green object floating nearby.

He forced the food from his stomach, which filled the water around him with half-digested bunker pieces. The pressure stayed,.

His strength was leaving him. He could feel himself being pulled closer to that green object that floated on the surface. His mind was full of panic and the strong instinct for survival was leaving him. He had no strength left. His will to live left him.

He felt shock as a sharp steel hook was driven into his side. He could feel himself being lifted from the water, followed by another shock as he was dropped onto a hard, cold aluminum deck. At that instant, Charlie's life came to an end with the last movement of his tail, as he lay on the bottom of a cartopper.

Further down the beach, a school of seventy-nine blues followed the bunkers south, with a new leader ...



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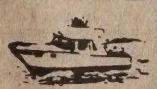

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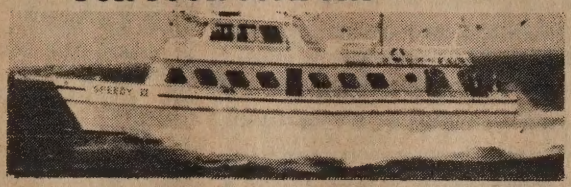

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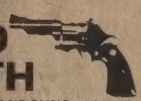

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Fishing Reports

MONTAUK

The Viking Fleet reports that Block Island codfishing has definitely improved and fares are averaging 10 cod per man with a few hefty blackfish mixed in. The cod are running 15-18 lbs., all on bait. Captain Paul Forsberg advises us that Mrs. Pat Lindroth, wife of Captain Al Lindroth of Freeport, fished aboard the **Viking Starship** out of the Florida Keys over the weekend of February 16. Pat landed the largest black grouper caught on this trip, a 58 pounder. She also hooked and landed amberjack, pompano, black grouper and a 217 lb. jewfish. Over 3500 lbs. were caught on the trip.

SEAFORD

Uncle Hermie's Fishing Station expects to start up operations March 10 under new management of Mr. Ted Witzensky.

CAPTREE

Captain Eddy Brincat of the **Captain Eddy B II** called to tell us that he is in the process of refinishing the cabin and pilot house and putting the finishing touches on his boat for the season. Eddy says he has several new programs planned for '79 and wants the boat in top shape by the end of this week. He refers you to his ad for further details.

FREEPORT

After two weeks of being ice in, the **Starstream** was greeted by wind and rough seas on Saturday. Eleven fares managed just three fish under very poor conditions.

Sunday, with the same poor conditions, no cod were taken by those aboard.

SHEEPSHEAD BAY

Captain Fred of the **Amberjack VI** tells us he has a Nantucket wreck trip scheduled for Friday night, May 25, sailing at 7PM. If the weather cooperates, this should be a real freezer filler of a trip.

The ice that kept the Sheepshead Bay Fleet at the docks for the last couple of weeks finally gave way and allowed a few of the boats to get out on Sunday. The cold water from the melting ice is driving the whiting far offshore and boats at this port are experiencing poor fishing. The **New Amberjack V** and the **Blue Sea III** fished at the BA Buoy in 130' to 150' of water where whiting were taken.

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BLUEFISH EXTINCT?

(Continued from page 5.)

next time hearings are held the Council won't be able to get away with renting a large room in a Holiday Inn. What do you say, Ladies and Gentlemen—let's make them go the whole hog by turning out in such numbers that the next time they schedule hearings in our area they will have to rent Yankee Stadium, Shea Stadium and the Nassau Coliseum!

It is extremely important that sportfishermen use the scheduled fact-finding hearings to impress upon the Council the tremendous social and economic value that the bluefish have to the sportfishing community. We have to convince them that a management plan is necessary to prevent purse seiners from entering this fishery and upsetting the harmonious relationship presently enjoyed between sport and commercial fishing interests, a rare enough occurrence to warrant Council action in itself. We don't want the council or any other government body to encourage the commercial fishermen to develop a frozen fish export market for bluefish, which would also upset this balance. All we want the Council to do is to set up their management plan so that they can gather the scientific and social information about the fishery necessary to manage the fish stocks in the future. (See Al Ristori's article on page 12.)

As we pointed out in the first paragraph, this is probably the most important editorial that we have printed in fourteen years. The choice is yours: attend these hearings en masse and ensure bluefishing for future generations, or sit home watching the boob tube and allow the bluefish to go the way of the bluefin tuna. Don't wait for the other guy to go, either—there's no such person as the other guy. Fishing clubs and organizations should all send official delegations to

(Continued on page 39.)

FISHERMAN'S CLASSIFIED

To place an ad in *The Long Island Fisherman's* classified ad section, send in copy for the ad exactly as you wish it to read, along with your check or money order for the full amount. *(Sorry, no billing.)* Rates for non-subscribers are 25-cents per word, 30 word ($7.50) minimum. Subscribers of *The Fisherman* receive a discount if they include the number off their subscription label. Classified rates for subscribers are: 20 cents per word, 30 word ($6.00) minimum. Discounts for extended runs: 12 times, 5%; 35 times, 10%; and 50 times, 15%. to run a photograph with an ad, add $16.80 to the words.

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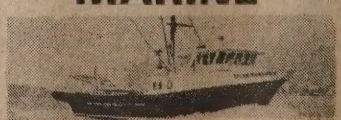
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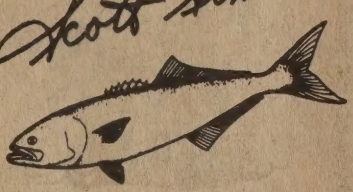
speak for their membership and also encourage individual members to band together and form car pools. It might not be a bad idea if every fishing club were to schedule their monthly meetings in the Holiday Inns at the hearings; but time is short. Don't be afraid to take the wife and kiddies along, either—the more bodies the merrier. The Long Island Fisherman will be represented at both hearings, with Doc Muller attending the meeting in Rockville Centre and myself at Riverhead.

Recreational sportfishermen can achieve a tremendous victory by turning out in large numbers at the scheduled hearings, but the opposite is also true ... if only a few show up and we are outnumbered by commercial fishing interests the results would be disastrous, with consequences more far-reaching than just this one problem. Because low attendance by sportfishermen would give legitimacy to the myth of the apathetic sportfishermen, whose lack of organization means that we can be pushed around by politicians and the bureaucracy without fear of retaliation. So let's put an end to this myth of apathy once and for all and send a message to Washington by filling the hearing rooms to overflowing!

Scott Simons



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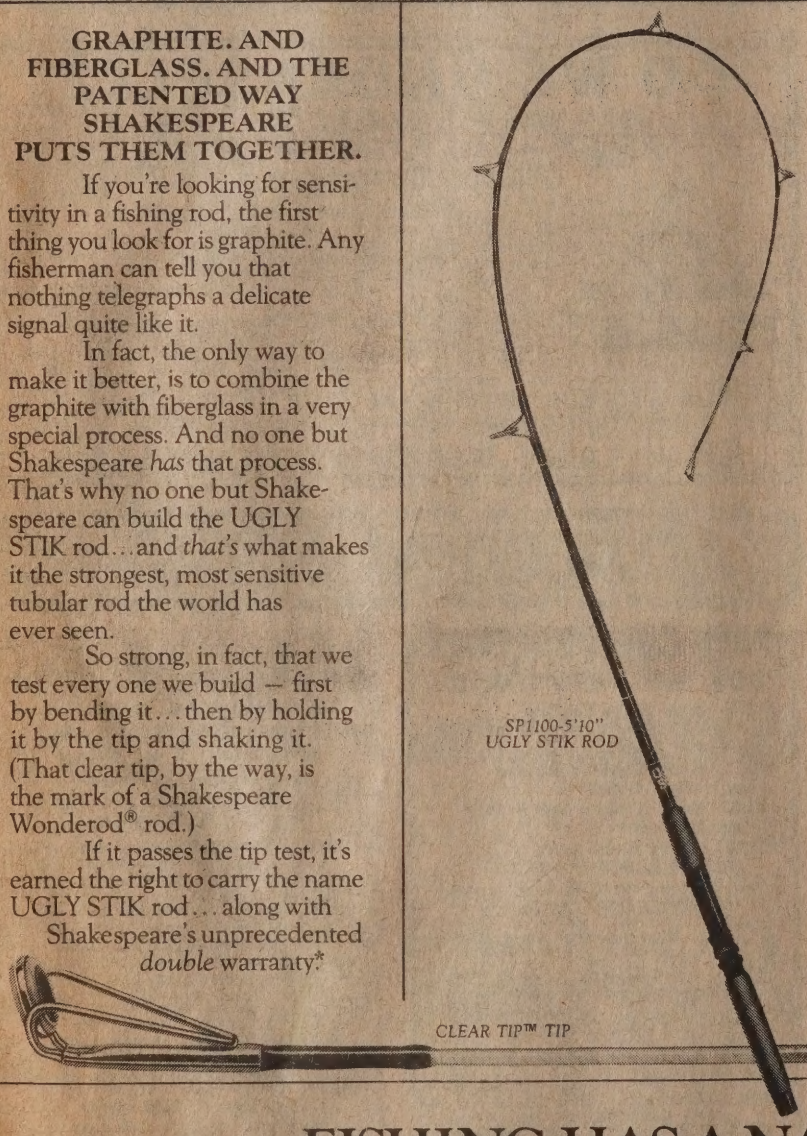

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